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GLIMPSES
OF
UNFAMILIAR JAPAN
(first Series)

BY
LAFCADIO HEARN
AUTHOR OF "KOKORO," "KWAIDAN," ETC.

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LEIPZIG
BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ
1907.

TO THE FRIENDS
WHOSE KINDNESS ALONE RENDERED POSSIBLE
MY SOJOURN IN THE ORIENT,—
PAYMASTER MITCHELL McDONALD, U. S. N.
AND
BASIL HALL CHAMBERLAIN, ESQ.
*Emeritus Professor of Philology and Japanese in the
Imperial University of Tōkyō.*
I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME
IN TOKEN OF
AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE.

PREFACE.

IN the Introduction to his charming "Tales of Old Japan," Mr. Mitford wrote in 1871: "The books which have been written of late years about Japan have either been compiled from official records, or have contained the sketchy impressions of passing travellers. Of the inner life of the Japanese the world at large knows but little: their religion, their superstitions, their ways of thought, the hidden springs by which they move,—all these are as yet mysteries."

This invisible life referred to by Mr. Mitford is the 'Unfamiliar Japan of which I have been able to obtain a few glimpses. The reader may, perhaps, be disappointed by their rarity; for a residence of little more than four years among the people—even by one who tries to adopt their habits and customs—scarcely suffices to enable the foreigner to begin to feel at home in this world of strangeness. None can feel more than the author himself how little has been accomplished in this volume, and how much remains to do.

The popular religious ideas—especially the ideas derived from Buddhism—and the curious superstitions touched upon in these sketches are little shared by the educated classes of New Japan. Except as regards his

characteristic indifference toward abstract "ideas in general and metaphysical speculation in particular, the Occidentalised Japanese of to-day stands almost on the intellectual plane of the cultivated Parisian or Bostonian. But he is inclined to treat with undue contempt all conceptions of the supernatural; and toward the great religious questions of the hour his attitude is one of perfect apathy. Rarely does his university training in modern philosophy impel him to attempt any independent study of relations, either sociological or psychological. For him, superstitions are simply superstitions; their relation to the emotional nature of the people interests him not at all.* And this not only because he thoroughly understands that people, but because the class to which he belongs is still unreasoningly, though quite naturally, ashamed of its older beliefs. Most of us who now call ourselves agnostics can recollect the feelings with which, in the period of our fresh emancipation from a faith far more irrational than Buddhism, we looked back upon the gloomy theology of our fathers. Intellectual Japan has become agnostic within only a few decades; and the suddenness of this mental revolution sufficiently explains the principal, though not perhaps all the causes of the present attitude of the superior class toward Buddhism. For the time being it certainly borders upon intolerance; and while such is the feeling even to religion as distinguished from superstition, the feeling toward superstition as distinguished from religion must be something stronger still.

* In striking contrast to this indifference is the strong, rational, farseeing conservatism of Viscount Tōrio,—a noble exception.

But the rare charm of Japanese life, so different from that of all other lands, is not to be found in its Europeanised circles. It is to be found among the great common people, who represent in Japan, as in all countries, the national virtues, and who still cling to their delightful old customs, their picturesque dresses, their Buddhist images, their household shrines, their beautiful and touching worship of ancestors. This is the life of which a foreign observer can never weary, if fortunate and sympathetic enough to enter into it,—the life that forces him sometimes to doubt whether the course of our boasted Western progress is really in the direction of moral development. Each day, while the years pass, there will be revealed to him some strange and unsuspected beauty in it. Like other life, it has its darker side; yet even this is brightness compared with the darker side of Western existence. It has its foibles, its follies, its vices, its cruelties; yet the more one sees of it, the more one marvels at its extraordinary goodness, its miraculous patience, its never-failing courtesy, its simplicity of heart, its intuitive charity. And to our own larger Occidental comprehension, its commonest superstitions, however contemned at Tōkyō, have rarest value as fragments of the unwritten literature of its hopes, its fears, its experience with right and wrong,—its primitive efforts to find solutions for the riddle of the Unseen. How much the lighter and kindlier superstitions of the people add to the charm of Japanese life can, indeed, be understood only by one who has long resided in the interior. A few of their beliefs are sinister,—such as that in demon-foxes, which public education is rapidly dissipating; but a large

number are comparable for beauty of fancy even to those Greek myths in which our noblest poets of to-day still find inspiration; while many others, which encourage kindness to the unfortunate, and kindness to animals, can never have produced any but the happiest moral results. The amusing presumption of domestic animals, and the comparative fearlessness of many wild creatures in the presence of man; the white clouds of gulls that hover about each incoming steamer in expectation of an alms of crumbs; the whirring of doves from temple-eaves to pick up the rice scattered for them by pilgrims; the familiar storks of ancient public gardens; the deer of holy shrines, awaiting cakes and caresses; the fish which raise their heads from sacred lotus-ponds when the stranger's shadow falls upon the water,—these and a hundred other pretty sights are due to fancies which, though called superstitious, inculcate in simplest form the sublime truth of the Unity of Life. And even when considering beliefs less attractive than these,—superstitions of which the grotesqueness may provoke a smile,—the impartial observer would do well to bear in mind the words of Lecky:—

“Many superstitions do undoubtedly answer to the Greek conception of slavish ‘fear of the Gods,’ and have been productive of unspeakable misery to mankind; but there are very many others of a different tendency. Superstitions appeal to our hopes as well as our fears. They often meet and gratify the inmost longings of the heart. They offer certainties where reason can only afford possibilities or probabilities. They supply conceptions on which the imagination loves to dwell. They

PREFACE.

sometimes impart even a new sanction to moral truths. Creating wants which they alone can satisfy, and fears which they alone can quell, they often become essential elements of happiness; and their consoling efficacy is most felt in the languid or troubled hours when it is most needed. We owe more to our illusions than to our knowledge. The imagination, which is altogether constructive, probably contributes more to our happiness than the reason, which in the sphere of speculation is mainly critical and destructive. The rude charm which, in the hour of danger or distress, the savage clasps so confidently to his breast, the sacred picture which is believed to shed a hallowing and protecting influence over the poor man's cottage, can bestow a more real consolation in the darkest hour of human suffering than can be afforded by the grandest theories of philosophy. . . . No error can be more grave than to imagine that when a critical spirit is abroad the pleasant beliefs will all remain, and the painful ones alone will perish."

That the critical spirit of modernised Japan is now indirectly aiding rather than opposing the efforts of foreign bigotry to destroy the simple, happy beliefs of the people, and substitute those cruel superstitions which the West has long intellectually outgrown,—the fancies of an unforgiving God and an everlasting hell,—is surely to be regretted. More than a hundred and sixty years ago Kaempfer wrote of the Japanese: "In the practice of virtue, in purity of life and outward devotion, they far outdo the Christians." And except where native morals have suffered by foreign contamina-

tion, as in the open ports, these words are true of the Japanese to-day. My own conviction, and that of many impartial and more experienced observers of Japanese life, is that Japan has nothing whatever to gain by conversion to Christianity, either morally or otherwise, but very much to lose

L. H.

KUMAMOTO, KYŪSHŪ, JAPAN.

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first charm of Japan is intangible and volatile as a perfume.

It began for me with my first kuruma-ride out of the European quarter of Yokohama into the Japanese town; and so much as I can recall of it is hereafter set down.

I.

It is with the delicious surprise of the first journey through Japanese streets—unable to make one's kuruma-runner understand anything but gestures, frantic gestures to roll on anywhere, everywhere, since all is unspeakably pleasurable and new—that one first receives the real sensation of being in the Orient, in this Far East so much read of, so long dreamed of, yet, as the eyes bear witness, heretofore all unknown. There is a romance even in the first full consciousness of this rather commonplace fact; but for me this consciousness is transfigured inexpressibly by the divine beauty of the day. There is some charm unutterable in the morning air, cool with the coolness of Japanese spring and wind-waves from the snowy cone of Fuji; a charm perhaps due rather to softest lucidity than to any positive tone,—an atmospheric limpidity extraordinary, with only a suggestion of blue in it, through which the most distant objects appear focussed with amazing sharpness. The sun is only pleasantly warm; the jinrikisha, or kuruma, is the most cosy little vehicle imaginable; and the street-vistas, as seen above the dancing white mushroom-shaped hat of my sandalled runner, have an allurement of which I fancy that I could never weary.

Elfish everything seems; for everything as well as

everybody is small, and queer, and mysterious: the little houses under their blue roofs, the little shop-fronts hung with blue, and the smiling little people in their blue costumes. The illusion is only broken by the occasional passing of a tall foreigner, and by divers shop-signs bearing announcements in absurd attempts at English. Nevertheless such discords only serve to emphasise reality; they never materially lessen the fascination of the funny little streets.

'Tis at first a delightfully odd confusion only, as you look down one of them, through an interminable flutter of flags and swaying of dark blue drapery, all made beautiful and mysterious with Japanese or Chinese lettering. For there are no immediately discernible laws of construction or decoration: each building seems to have a fantastic prettiness of its own; nothing is exactly like anything else, and all is bewilderingly novel. But gradually, after an hour passed in the quarter, the eye begins to recognise in a vague way some general plan in the construction of these low, light, queerly-gabled wooden houses, mostly unpainted, with their first storeys all open to the street, and thin strips of roofing sloping above each shop-front, like awnings, back to the miniature balconies of paper-screened second storeys. You begin to understand the common plan of the tiny shops, with their matted floors well raised above the street level, and the general perpendicular arrangement of sign-lettering, whether undulating on drapery or glimmering on gilded and lacquered sign-boards. You observe that the same rich dark blue which dominates in popular costume rules also in shop draperies, though there is a sprinkling of other tints,—bright blue and white and

red (no greens or yellows). And then you note also that the dresses of the labourers are lettered with the same wonderful lettering as the shop draperies. No arabesques could produce such an effect. As modified for decorative purposes, these ideographs have a speaking symmetry which no design without a meaning could possess. As they appear on the back of a workman's frock—pure white on dark blue—and large enough to be easily read at a great distance (indicating some guild or company of which the wearer is a member or employee), they give to the poor cheap garment a factitious appearance of splendour.

And finally, while you are still puzzling over the mystery of things, there will come to you like a revelation the knowledge that most of the amazing picturesqueness of these streets is simply due to the profusion of Chinese and Japanese characters in white, black, blue, or gold, decorating everything,—even surfaces of door-posts and paper screens. Perhaps, then, for one moment, you will imagine the effect of English lettering substituted for those magical characters; and the mere idea will give to whatever æsthetic sentiment you may possess a brutal shock, and you will become, as I have become, an enemy of the Romaji-Kwai,—that society founded for the ugly utilitarian purpose of introducing the use of English letters in writing Japanese.

II.

An ideograph does not make upon the Japanese brain any impression similar to that created in the Occidental brain by a letter or combination of letters,—dull, inanimate symbols of vocal sounds. To the

Japanese brain an ideograph is a vivid picture: it lives; it speaks; it gesticulates. And the whole space of a Japanese street is full of such living characters,—figures that cry out to the eyes, words that smile or grimace like faces.

What such lettering is, compared with our own lifeless types, can be understood only by those who have lived in the farther East. For even the printed characters of Japanese or Chinese imported texts give no suggestion of the possible beauty of the same characters as modified for decorative inscriptions, for sculptural use, or for the commonest advertising purposes. No rigid convention fetters the fancy of the calligrapher or designer: each strives to make his characters more beautiful than any others; and generations upon generations of artists have been toiling from time immemorial with like emulation, so that through centuries and centuries of tireless effort and study, the primitive hieroglyph or ideograph has been evolved into a thing of beauty indescribable. It consists only of a certain number of brush-strokes; but in each stroke there is an undiscoverable secret art of grace, proportion, imperceptible curve, which actually makes it seem alive, and bears witness that even during the lightning-moment of its creation the artist felt with his brush for the ideal shape of the stroke *equally along its entire length*, from head to tail. But the art of the strokes is not all; the art of their combination is that which produces the enchantment, often so as to astonish the Japanese themselves. It is not surprising, indeed, considering the strangely personal, animate, esoteric aspect of Japanese lettering, that there should be wonderful legends of calligraphy, relating how words

written by holy experts became incarnate, and descended from their tablets to hold converse with mankind.

III.

My kurumaya calls himself "Cha." He has a white hat which looks like the top of an enormous mushroom; a short blue wide-sleeved jacket; blue drawers, close-fitting as "tights," and reaching to his ankles; and light straw sandals bound upon his bare feet with cords of palmetto-fibre. Doubtless he typifies all the patience, endurance, and insidious coaxing powers of his class. He has already manifested his power to make me give him more than the law allows; and I have been warned against him in vain. For the first sensation of having a human being for a horse, trotting between shafts, unwearingly bobbing up and down before you for hours, is alone enough to evoke a feeling of compassion. And when this human being, thus trotting between shafts, with all his hopes, memories, sentiments, and comprehensions, happens to have the gentlest smile, and the power to return the least favour by an apparent display of infinite gratitude, this compassion becomes sympathy, and provokes unreasoning impulses to self-sacrifice. I think the sight of the profuse perspiration has also something to do with the feeling, for it makes one think of the cost of heart-beats and muscle-contractions, likewise of chills, congestions, and pleurisy. Cha's clothing is drenched; and he mops his face with a small sky-blue towel, with figures of bamboo-sprays and sparrows in white upon it, which towel he carries wrapped about his wrist as he runs.

That, however, which attracts me in Cha—Cha considered not as a motive power at all, but as a personality—I am rapidly learning to discern in the multitudes of faces turned toward us as we roll through these miniature streets. And perhaps the supremely pleasurable impression of this morning is that produced by the singular gentleness of popular scrutiny. Everybody looks at you curiously; but there is never anything disagreeable, much less hostile in the gaze: most commonly it is accompanied by a smile or half smile. And the ultimate consequence of all these kindly curious looks and smiles is that the stranger finds himself thinking of fairy-land. Hackneyed to the degree of provocation this statement no doubt is: everybody describing the sensations of his first Japanese day talks of the land as fairy-land, and of its people as fairy-folk. Yet there is a natural reason for this unanimity in choice of terms to describe what is almost impossible to describe more accurately at the first essay. To find oneself suddenly in a world where everything is upon a smaller and daintier scale than with us,—a world of lesser and seemingly kindlier beings, all smiling at you as if to wish you well, —a world where all movement is slow and soft, and voices are hushed,—a world where land, life, and sky are unlike all that one has known elsewhere,—this is surely the realisation, for imaginations nourished with English folklore, of the old dream of a World of Elves.

IV.

The traveller who enters suddenly into a period of social change—especially change from a feudal past to a democratic present—is likely to regret the decay of

things beautiful and the ugliness of things new. What of both I may yet discover in Japan I know not; but to-day, in these exotic streets, the old and the new mingle so well that one seems to set off the other. The line of tiny white telegraph poles carrying the world's news to papers printed in a mixture of Chinese and Japanese characters; an electric bell in some tea-house with an Oriental riddle of text pasted beside the ivory button; a shop of American sewing-machines next to the shop of a maker of Buddhist images; the establishment of a photographer beside the establishment of a manufacturer of straw sandals: all these present no striking incongruities, for each sample of Occidental innovation is set into an Oriental frame that seems adaptable to any picture. But on the first day, at least, the Old alone is new for the stranger, and suffices to absorb his attention. It then appears to him that everything Japanese is delicate, exquisite, admirable,—even a pair of common wooden chopsticks in a paper bag with a little drawing upon it; even a package of toothpicks of cherry-wood, bound with a paper wrapper wonderfully lettered in three different colours; even the little sky-blue towel, with designs of flying sparrows upon it, which the *jinrikisha* man uses to wipe his face. The bank bills, the commonest copper coins, are things of beauty. Even the piece of plaited coloured string used by the shop-keeper in tying up your last purchase is a pretty curiosity. Curiosities and dainty objects bewilder you by their very multitude: on either side of you, wherever you turn your eyes, are countless wonderful things as yet incomprehensible.

But it is perilous to look at them. Every time you

dare to look, something obliges you to buy it,—unless, as may often happen, the smiling vender invites your inspection of so many varieties of one article, each specially and all unspeakably desirable, that you flee away out of mere terror at your own impulses. The shopkeeper never asks you to buy; but his wares are enchanted, and if you once begin buying you are lost. Cheapness means only a temptation to commit bankruptcy; for the resources of irresistible artistic cheapness are inexhaustible. The largest steamer that crosses the Pacific could not contain what you wish to purchase. For, although you may not, perhaps, confess the fact to yourself, what you really want to buy is not the contents of a shop; you want the shop and the shopkeeper, and streets of shops with their draperies and their habitants, the whole city and the bay and the mountains begirdling it, and Fujiyama's white witchery overhanging it in the speckless sky, all Japan, in very truth, with its magical trees and luminous atmosphere, with all its cities and towns and temples, and forty millions of the most lovable people in the universe.

Now there comes to my mind something I once heard said by a practical American on hearing of a great fire in Japan: "Oh! those people can afford fires; their houses are so cheaply built." It is true that the frail wooden houses of the common people can be cheaply and quickly replaced; but that which was within them to make them beautiful cannot,—and every fire is an art tragedy. For this is the land of infinite hand-made variety; machinery has not yet been able to introduce sameness and utilitarian ugliness in cheap

production (except in response to foreign demand for bad taste to suit vulgar markets), and each object made by the artist or artisan differs still from all others, even of his own making. And each time something beautiful perishes by fire, it is a something representing an individual idea.

Happily the art impulse itself, in this country of conflagrations, has a vitality which survives each generation of artists, and defies the flame that changes their labour to ashes or melts it to shapelessness. The idea whose symbol has perished will reappear again in other creations,—perhaps after the passing of a century,—modified, indeed, yet recognisably of kin to the thought of the past. And every artist is a ghostly worker. Not by years of groping and sacrifice does he find his highest expression; the sacrificial past is within him; his art is an inheritance; his fingers are guided by the dead in the delineation of a flying bird, of the vapours of mountains, of the colours of the morning and the evening, of the shape of branches and the spring burst of flowers: generations of skilled workmen have given him their cunning, and revive in the wonder of his drawing. What was conscious effort in the beginning became unconscious in later centuries,—becomes almost automatic in the living man,—becomes the art instinctive. Wherefore, one coloured print by a Hokusai or Hiroshige, originally sold for less than a cent, may have more real art in it than many a Western painting valued at more than the worth of a whole Japanese street.

V.

Here are Hokusai's own figures walking about in straw rain-coats, and immense mushroom-shaped hats of straw, and straw sandals,—bare-limbed peasants, deeply tanned by wind and sun; and patient-faced mothers with smiling bald babies on their backs, toddling by upon their geta (high, noisy, wooden clogs), and robed merchants squatting and smoking their little brass pipes among the countless riddles of their shops.

Then I notice how small and shapely the feet of the people are,—whether bare brown feet of peasants, or beautiful feet of children wearing tiny, tiny geta, or feet of young girls in snowy tabi. The tabi, the white digitated stocking, gives to a small light foot a mythological aspect,—the white cleft grace of the foot of a fauness. Clad or bare, the Japanese foot has the antique symmetry: it has not yet been distorted by the infamous foot-gear which has deformed the feet of Occidentals.

. . . Of every pair of Japanese wooden clogs, one makes in walking a slightly different sound from the other, as *kring* to *krang*; so that the echo of the walker's steps has an alternate rhythm of tones. On a pavement, such as that of a railway station, the sound obtains immense sonority; and a crowd will sometimes intentionally fall into step, with the drollest conceivable result of drawling wooden noise.

VI.

"Tera e yuke!"

I have been obliged to return to the European hotel,—not because of the noon-meal, as I really begrudge

myself the time necessary to eat it, but because I cannot make Cha understand that I want to visit a Buddhist temple. Now Cha understands; my landlord has uttered the mystical words,—

“Tera e yuke!”

A few minutes of running along broad thoroughfares lined with gardens and costly ugly European buildings; then passing the bridge of a canal stocked with unpainted sharp-prowed craft of extraordinary construction, we again plunge into narrow low bright pretty streets,—into another part of the Japanese city. And Cha runs at the top of his speed between more rows of little ark-shaped houses, narrower above than below; between other unfamiliar lines of little open shops. And always over the shops little strips of blue-tiled roof slope back to the paper-screened chamber of upper floors; and from all the façades hang draperies dark-blue, or white, or crimson,—foot-breadths of texture covered with beautiful Japanese lettering, white on blue, red on black, black on white. But all this flies by swiftly as a dream. Once more we cross a canal; we rush up a narrow street rising to meet a hill; and Cha, halting suddenly before an immense flight of broad stone steps, sets the shafts of his vehicle on the ground that I may dismount, and, pointing to the steps, exclaims,—

“Tera!”

I dismount, and ascend them, and, reaching a broad terrace, find myself face to face with a wonderful gate, topped by a tilted, peaked, many-cornered Chinese roof. It is all strangely carven, this gate. Dragons are intertwined in a frieze above its open doors; and the panels of the doors themselves are similarly sculptured;

and there are gargoyles—grotesque lion heads—protruding from the eaves. And the whole is grey, stone-coloured; to me, nevertheless, the carvings do not seem to have the fixity of sculpture; all the snakeries and dragonries appear to undulate with a swarming motion, elusively, in eddyings as of water.

I turn a moment to look back through the glorious light. Sea and sky mingle in the same beautiful pale clear blue. Below me the billowing of bluish roofs reaches to the verge of the unruffled bay on the right, and to the feet of the green wooded hills flanking the city on two sides. Beyond that semicircle of green hills rises a lofty range of serrated mountains, indigo silhouettes. And enormously high above the line of them towers an apparition indescribably lovely,—one solitary snowy cone, so filmily exquisite, so spiritually white, that but for its immemorially familiar outline, one would surely deem it a shape of cloud. Invisible its base remains, being the same delicious tint as the sky: only above the eternal snow-line its dreamy cone appears, seeming to hang, the ghost of a peak, between the luminous land and the luminous heaven,—the sacred and matchless mountain, Fujiyama.

And suddenly, a singular sensation comes upon me as I stand before this weirdly sculptured portal,—a sensation of dream and doubt. It seems to me that the steps, and the dragon-swarming gate, and the blue sky arching over the roofs of the town, and the ghostly beauty of Fuji, and the shadow of myself there stretching upon the grey masonry, must all vanish presently. Why such a feeling? Doubtless because the forms before me—

the curved roofs, the coiling dragons, the Chinese grotesqueries of carving—do not really appear to me as things new, but as things dreamed: the sight of them must have stirred to life forgotten memoires of picture-books. A moment, and the delusion vanishes; the romance of reality returns, with freshened consciousness of all that which is truly and deliciously new; the magical transparencies of distance, the wondrous delicacy of the tones of the living picture, the enormous height of the summer blue, and the white soft witchery of the Japanese sun.

VII.

I pass on and climb more steps to a second gate with similar gargoyle and swarming of dragons, and enter a court where graceful votive lanterns of stone stand like monuments. On my right and left two great grotesque stone lions are sitting,—the lions of Buddha, male and female. Beyond is a long low light building, with curved and gabled roof of blue tiles, and three wooden steps before its entrance. Its sides are simple wooden screens covered with thin white paper. This is the temple.

On the steps I take off my shoes; a young man slides aside the screens closing the entrance, and bows me a gracious welcome. And I go in, feeling under my feet a softness of matting thick as bedding. An immense square apartment is before me, full of an unfamiliar sweet smell—the scent of Japanese incense; but after the full blaze of the sun, the paper-filtered light here is dim as moonshine; for a minute or two I can see nothing but gleams of gilding in a soft gloom. Then, my eyes becoming accustomed to the obscurity, I perceive against the paper-paned screens surrounding the sanctuary on

three sides shapes of enormous flowers cutting like silhouettes against the vague white light. I approach and find them to be paper flowers,—symbolic lotus-blossoms beautifully coloured, with curling leaves gilded on the upper surface and bright green beneath. At the dark end of the apartment, facing the entrance, is the altar of Buddha, a rich and lofty altar, covered with bronzes and gilded utensils clustered to right and left of a shrine like a tiny gold temple. But I see no statue; only a mystery of unfamiliar shapes of burnished metal, relieved against darkness, a darkness behind the shrine and altar—whether recess or inner sanctuary I cannot distinguish.

The young attendant who ushered me into the temple now approaches, and, to my great surprise, exclaims in excellent English, pointing to a richly decorated gilded object between groups of candelabra on the altar:—

“That is the shrine of Buddha.”

“And I would like to make an offering to Buddha,” I respond.

“It is not necessary,” he says, with a polite smile.

But I insist; and he places the little offering for me upon the altar. Then he invites me to his own room, in a wing of the building,—a large luminous room, without furniture, beautifully matted. And we sit down upon the floor and chat. He tells me he is a student in the temple. He learned English in Tōkyō, and speaks it with a curious accent, but with fine choice of words. Finally he asks me—

“Are you a Christian?”

And I answer truthfully: —

“No.”

“Are you a Buddhist?”

“Not exactly.”

“Why do you make offerings if you do not believe in Buddha?”

“I revere the beauty of his teaching, and the faith of those who follow it.”

“Are there Buddhists in England and America?”

“There are, at least, a great many interested in Buddhist philosophy.”

And he takes from an alcove a little book, and gives it to me to examine. It is an English copy of Olcott's “Buddhist Catechism.”

“Why is there no image of Buddha in your temple?” I ask.

“There is a small one in the shrine upon the altar,” the student answers; “but the shrine is closed. And we have several large ones. But the image of Buddha is not exposed here every day—only upon festal days. And some images are exposed only once or twice a year.”

From my place, I can see, between the open paper screens, men and women ascending the steps, to kneel and pray before the entrance of the temple. They kneel with such naïve reverence, so gracefully and so naturally, that the kneeling of our Occidental devotees seems a clumsy stumbling by comparison. Some only join their hands; others clap them three times loudly and slowly; then they bow their heads, pray silently for a moment, and rise and depart. The shortness of the prayers impresses me as something novel and interesting. From

time to time I hear the clink and rattle of brazen coin cast into the great wooden money-box at the entrance.

I turn to the young student, and ask him:—

“Why do they clap their hands three times before they pray?”

He answers:—

“Three times for the Sansai, the Three Powers: Heaven, Earth, Man.”

“But do they clap their hands to call the Gods, as Japanese clap their hands to summon their attendants?”

“Oh, no!” he replies. “The clapping of hands represents only the awakening from the Dream of the Long Night.”*

“What night? what dream?”

He hesitates some moments before making answer:—

“The Buddha said: All beings are only dreaming in this fleeting world of unhappiness.”

“Then the clapping of hands signifies that in prayer the soul awakens from such dreaming?”

“Yes.”

“You understand what I mean by the word ‘soul?’”

“Oh, yes! Buddhists believe the soul always was, —always will be.”

“Even in Nirvana?”

“Yes.”

While we are thus chatting the Chief Priest of the

* I do not think this explanation is correct; but it is interesting, as the first which I obtained upon the subject. Properly speaking, Buddhist worshippers should not clap the hands, but only rub them softly together. Shintō worshippers always clap their hands four times.

temple enters,—a very aged man,—accompanied by two young priests, and I am presented to them; and the three bow very low, showing me the glossy crowns of their smoothly-shaven heads, before seating themselves in the fashion of gods upon the floor. I observe they do not smile; these are the first Japanese I have seen who do not smile: their faces are impassive as the faces of images. But their long eyes observe me very closely, while the student interprets their questions, and while I attempt to tell them something about the translations of the Sutras in our "Sacred Books of the East," and about the labours of Beal and Burnouf and Feer and Davids and Kern, and others. They listen without change of countenance, and utter no word in response to the young student's translation of my remarks. Tea, however, is brought in and set before me in a tiny cup, placed in a little brazen saucer, shaped like a lotus-leaf; and I am invited to partake of some little sugar-cakes (*kwashi*), stamped with a figure which I recognise as the Swastika, the ancient Indian symbol of the Wheel of the Law.

As I rise to go, all rise with me; and at the steps the student asks for my name and address.

"For," he adds, "you will not see me here again, as I am going to leave the temple. But I will visit you."

"And your name?" I ask.

"Call me Akira," he answers.

At the threshold I bow my good-bye; and they all bow very, very low,—one blue-black head, three glossy heads like balls of ivory. And as I go, only Akira smiles.

VIII.

"Tera?" queries Cha, with his immense white hat in his hand, as I resume my seat in the jinrikisha at the foot of the steps. Which no doubt means, do I want to see any more temples? Most certainly I do: I have not yet seen Buddha.

"Yes, tera, Cha."

And again begins the long panorama of mysterious shops and tilted eaves, and fantastic riddles written over everything. I have no idea in what direction Cha is running. I only know that the streets seem to become always narrower as we go, and that some of the houses look like great wickerwork pigeon-cages only, and that we pass over several bridges before we halt again at the foot of another hill. There is a lofty flight of steps here also, and before them a structure which I know is both a gate and a symbol, imposing, yet in no manner resembling the great Buddhist gateway seen before. Astonishingly simple all the lines of it are: it has no carving, no colouring, no lettering upon it; yet it has a weird solemnity, an enigmatic beauty. It is a torii.

"Miya," observes Cha. Not a tera this time, but a shrine of the gods of the more ancient faith of the land,—a miya.

I am standing before a Shintō symbol; I see for the first time, out of a picture at least, a torii. How describe a torii to those who have never looked at one even in a photograph or engraving? Two lofty columns, like gate-pillars, supporting horizontally two cross-beams, the lower and lighter beam having its ends fitted into the columns a little distance below their summits; the

uppermost and larger beam supported upon the tops of the columns, and projecting well beyond them to right and left. That is a torii: the construction varying little in design, whether made of stone, wood, or metal. But this description can give no correct idea of the appearance of a torii, of its majestic aspect, of its mystical suggestiveness as a gateway. The first time you see a noble one, you will imagine, perhaps, that you see the colossal model of some beautiful Chinese letter towering against the sky; for all the lines of the thing have the grace of an animated ideograph,—have the bold angles and curves of characters made with four sweeps of a master-brush.*

Passing the torii I ascend a flight of perhaps one hundred stone steps, and find at their summit a second torii, from whose lower cross-beam hangs festooned the mystic shimenawa. It is in this case a hempen rope of perhaps two inches in diameter through its greater length, but tapering off at either end like a snake. Sometimes the shimenawa is made of bronze, when the torii itself is of bronze; but according to tradition it should be made of straw, and most commonly is. For it represents the straw rope which the deity Futo-tama-no-mikoto stretched behind the Sun-goddess, Ama-terasu-oh-o-mi-Kami, after Ame-no-ta-jikara-wo-no-Kami, the

* Various writers, following the opinion of the Japanologue Satow, have stated that the torii was originally a bird-perch for fowls offered up to the gods at Shintō shrines,—“not as food, but to give warning of daybreak.” The etymology of the word is said to be “bird-rest” by some authorities; but Aston, not less of an authority, derives it from words which would give simply the meaning of a gateway. See Chamberlain’s *Things Japanese*, pp. 429, 430.

Heavenly-handstrength-god, had pulled her out, as is told in that ancient myth of Shintō which Professor Chamberlain has translated.* And the shimenawa, in its commoner and simpler form, has pendent tufts of straw along its entire length, at regular intervals, because originally made, tradition declares, of grass pulled up by the roots which protruded from the twist of it.

Advancing beyond this torii, I find myself in a sort of park or pleasure-ground on the summit of the hill. There is a small temple on the right; it is all closed up; and I have read so much about the disappointing vacuity of Shintō temples that I do not regret the absence of its guardian. And I see before me what is infinitely more interesting,—a grove of cherry-trees covered with something unutterably beautiful,—a dazzling mist of snowy blossoms clinging like summer cloud-fleece about every branch and twig; and the ground beneath them, and the path before me, is white with the soft, thick, odorous snow of fallen petals.

Beyond this loveliness are flower-plots surrounding tiny shrines; and marvellous grotto-work, full of monsters,—dragons and mythologic beings chiselled in the rock; and miniature landscape work with tiny groves of dwarf trees, and lilliputian lakes, and microscopic brooks and bridges and cascades. Here, also, are swings for children. And here are belvederes, perched on the verge of the hill, wherfrom the whole fair city, and the whole smooth bay speckled with fishing-sails no bigger than pin-heads, and the far, faint, high promontories reaching

* Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain has held the extraordinary position of Professor of *Japanese* in the Imperial University of Japan,—no small honour to English philology!

into the sea, are all visible in one delicious view,—blue-pencilled in a beauty of ghostly haze indescribable.

Why should the trees be so lovely in Japan? With us, a plum or cherry tree in flower is not an astonishing sight; but here it is a miracle of beauty so bewildering that, however much you may have previously read about it, the real spectacle strikes you dumb. You see no leaves,—only one great filmy mist of petals. Is it that the trees have been so long domesticated and caressed by man in this land of the Gods, that they have acquired souls, and strive to show their gratitude, like women loved, by making themselves more beautiful for man's sake? Assuredly they have mastered men's hearts by their loveliness, like beautiful slaves. That is to say, Japanese hearts. Apparently there have been some foreign tourists of the brutal class in this place, since it has been deemed necessary to set up inscriptions in English announcing that "IT IS FORBIDDEN TO INJURE THE TREES."

IX.

"Tera?"

"Yes, Cha, tera."

But only for a brief while do I traverse Japanese streets. The houses separate, become scattered along the feet of the hills: the city thins away through little valleys, and vanishes at last behind. And we follow a curving road overlooking the sea. Green hills slope steeply down to the edge of the way on the right; on the left, far below, spreads a vast stretch of dun sand and salty pools to a line of surf so distant that it is discernible only as a moving white thread. The tide

is out; and thousands of cockle-gatherers are scattered over the sands, at such distances that their stooping figures, dotting the glimmering sea-bed, appear no larger than gnats. And some are coming along the road before us, returning from their search with well-filled baskets,—girls with faces almost as rosy as the faces of English girls.

As the jinrikisha rattles on, the hills dominating the road grow higher. All at once Cha halts again before the steepest and loftiest flight of temple steps I have yet seen.

I climb and climb and climb, halting perforce betimes, to ease the violent aching of my quadriceps muscles; reach the top completely out of breath; and find myself between two lions of stone; one showing his fangs, the other with jaws closed. Before me stands the temple, at the farther end of a small bare plateau surrounded on three sides by low cliffs,—a small temple, looking very old and grey. From a rocky height to the left of the building, a little cataract rumbles down into a pool, ringed in by a palisade. The voice of the water drowns all other sounds. A sharp wind is blowing from the ocean: the place is chill even in the sun, and bleak, and desolate, as if no prayer had been uttered in it for a hundred years.

Cha taps and calls, while I take off my shoes upon the worn wooden steps of the temple; and after a minute of waiting, we hear a muffled step approaching and a hollow cough behind the paper screens. They slide open; and an old white-robed priest appears, and motions me, with a low bow, to enter. He has a kindly face; and his smile of welcome seems to me one of the

most exquisite I have ever been greeted with. Then he coughs again, so badly that I think if I ever come here another time, I shall ask for him in vain.

I go in, feeling that soft, spotless, cushioned matting beneath my feet with which the floors of all Japanese buildings are covered. I pass the indispensable bell and lacquered reading-desk; and before me I see other screens only, stretching from floor to ceiling. The old man, still coughing, slides back one of these upon the right, and waves me into the dimness of an inner sanctuary, haunted by faint odours of incense. A colossal bronze lamp, with snarling gilded dragons coiled about its columnar stem, is the first object I discern; and, in passing it, my shoulder sets ringing a festoon of little bells suspended from the lotus-shaped summit of it. Then I reach the altar, gropingly, unable yet to distinguish forms clearly. But the priest, sliding back screen after screen, pours in light upon the gilded brasses and the inscriptions; and I look for the image of the Deity or presiding Spirit between the altar-groups of convoluted candelabra. And I see—only a mirror, a round, pale disk of polished metal, and my own face therein, and behind this mockery of me a phantom of the far sea.

Only a mirror! Symbolising what? Illusion? or that the Universe exists for us solely as the reflection of our own souls? or the old Chinese teaching that we must seek the Buddha only in our own hearts? Perhaps some day I shall be able to find out all these things.

As I sit on the temple steps, putting on my shoes preparatory to going, the kind old priest approaches me again, and, bowing, presents a bowl. I hastily drop

some coins in it, imagining it to be a Buddhist alms-bowl, before discovering it to be full of hot water. But the old man's beautiful courtesy saves me from feeling all the grossness of my mistake. Without a word, and still preserving his kindly smile, he takes the bowl away, and, returning presently with another bowl, empty, fills it with hot water from a little kettle, and makes a sign to me to drink.

Tea is most usually offered to visitors at temples; but this little shrine is very, very poor; and I have a suspicion that the old priest suffers betimes for want of what no fellow-creature should be permitted to need. As I descend the windy steps to the roadway I see him still looking after me, and I hear once more his hollow cough.

Then the mockery of the mirror recurs to me. I am beginning to wonder whether I shall ever be able to discover that which I seek—outside of myself! That is, outside of my own imagination.

X.

“Tera?” once more queries Cha.

“Tera, no,—it is getting late. Hotel, Cha.”

But Cha, turning the corner of a narrow street, on our homeward route, halts the jinrikisha before a shrine or tiny temple scarcely larger than the smallest of Japanese shops, yet more of a surprise to me than any of the larger sacred edifices already visited. For on either side of the entrance stand two monster-figures, nude, blood-red, demoniac, fearfully muscled, with feet like lions, and hands brandishing gilded thunderbolts, and eyes of delirious fury; the guardians of holy things,

the Ni-Ō, or "Two Kings."* And right between these crimson monsters a young girl stands looking at us; her slight figure, in robe of silver grey and girdle of iris-violet, relieved deliciously against the twilight darkness of the interior. Her face, impassive and curiously delicate, would charm wherever seen; but here, by strange contrast with the frightful grotesqueries on either side of her, it produces an effect unimaginable. Then I find myself wondering whether my feeling of repulsion toward those twin monstrosities be altogether just, seeing that so charming a maiden deems them worthy of veneration. And they even cease to seem ugly as I watch her standing there between them, dainty and slender as some splendid moth, and always naïvely gazing at the foreigner, utterly unconscious that they might have seemed to him both unholy and uncomely.

What are they? Artistically they are Buddhist transformations of Brahma and of Indra. Enveloped by the absorbing, all-transforming magical atmosphere of Buddhism, Indra can now wield his thunderbolts only in defence of the faith which has dethroned him: he has

* These Ni-Ō, however, the first I saw in Japan, were very clumsy figures. There are magnificent Ni-Ō to be seen in some of the great temple gateways in Tōkyō, Kyōto, and elsewhere. The grandest of all are those in the Ni-Ō Mon, or "Two Kings' Gate," of the huge Tōdaiji temple at Nara. They are eight hundred years old. It is impossible not to admire the conception of stormy dignity and hurricane-force embodied in those colossal figures.

Prayers are addressed to the Ni-Ō, especially by pilgrims. Most of their statues are disfigured by little pellets of white paper, which people chew into a pulp and then spit at them. There is a curious superstition that if the pellet sticks to the statue the prayer is heard: if, on the other hand, it falls to the ground, the prayer will not be answered.

become a keeper of the temple gates; nay, has even become a servant of Bosatsu (*Bodhisattvas*), for this is only a shrine of Kwannon, Goddess of Mercy, not yet a Buddha.

“Hotel, Cha, hotel!” I cry out again, for the way is long, and the sun sinking,—sinking in the softest imaginable glow of topazine light. I have not seen Shaka (so the Japanese have transformed the name Sakya-Muni); I have not looked upon the face of the Buddha. Perhaps I may be able to find his image to-morrow, somewhere in this wilderness of wooden streets, or upon the summit of some yet unvisited hill.

The sun is gone; the topaz-light is gone; and Cha stops to light his lantern of paper; and we hurry on again, between two long lines of painted paper lanterns suspended before the shops: so closely set, so level those lines are, that they seem two interminable strings of pearls of fire. And suddenly a sound—solemn, profound, mighty—peals to my ears over the roofs of the town, the voice of the tsurigane, the great temple-bell of Nogiyama.

All too short the day seemed. Yet my eyes have been so long dazzled by the great white light, and so confused by the sorcery of that interminable maze of mysterious signs which made each street vista seem a glimpse into some enormous *grimoire*, that they are now weary even of the soft glowing of all these paper lanterns, likewise covered with characters that look like texts from a Book of Magic. And I feel at last the coming of that drowsiness which always follows enchantment.

XI.

“Amma-kamishimo-go-hyakmon!”

A woman's voice ringing through the night, chanting in a tone of singular sweetness words of which each syllable comes through my open window like a wavelet of flute-sound. My Japanese servant, who speaks a little English, has told me what they mean, those words:—

“Amma-kamishimo-go-hyakmon!”

And always between these long, sweet calls I hear a plaintive whistle, one long note first, then two short ones in another key. It is the whistle of the amma, the poor blind woman who earns her living by shampooing the sick or the weary, and whose whistle warns pedestrians and drivers of vehicles to take heed for her sake, as she cannot see. And she sings also that the weary and the sick may call her in.

“Amma-kamishimo-go-hyakmon!”

The saddest melody, but the sweetest voice. Her cry signifies that for the sum of “five hundred mon” she will come and rub your weary body “above and below,” and make the weariness or the pain go away. Five hundred mon are the equivalent of five sen (Japanese cents); there are ten rin to a sen, and ten mon to one rin. The strange sweetness of the voice is haunting,—makes me even wish to have some pains, that I might pay five hundred mon to have them driven away.

I lie down to sleep, and I dream. I see Chinese texts—multitudinous, weird, mysterious—fleeing by me, all in one direction; ideographs white and dark, upon sign-boards, upon paper screens, upon backs of sandalled

men. They seem to live, these ideographs, with conscious life; they are moving their parts, moving with a movement as of insects, monstrously, like *phasmidæ*. I am rolling always through low, narrow, luminous streets in a phantom jinrikisha, whose wheels make no sound. And always, always, I see the huge white mushroom-shaped hat of Cha dancing up and down before me as he runs.

II.

THE WRITING OF KŌBŌDAISHI.

I.

KŌBŌDAISHI, most holy of Buddhist priests, and founder of the Shingon-shū,—which is the sect of Akira,—first taught the men of Japan to write the writing called Hiragana and the syllabary I-ro-ha; and Kōbōdaishi was himself the most wonderful of all writers, and the most skilful wizard among scribes.

And in the Book, Kōbōdaishi-ichi-dai-ki, it is related that when he was in China, the name of a certain room in the palace of the Emperor having become effaced by time, the Emperor sent for him and bade him write the name anew. Thereupon Kōbōdaishi took a brush in his right hand, and a brush in his left; and one brush between the toes of his left foot, and another between the toes of his right, and one in his mouth also; and with those five brushes, so holding them, he limned the characters upon the wall. And the characters were beautiful beyond any that had ever been seen in China,—smooth-flowing as the ripples in the current of a river. And Kōbōdaishi then took a brush, and with it from a distance spattered drops of ink upon the wall; and the drops as they fell became transformed and turned into beautiful characters. And the Emperor gave to Kōbōdaishi the name Gohitsu-Oshō, signifying The Priest who writes with Five Brushes.

At another time, while the saint was dwelling in Taka-wasan, near to Kyōto, the Emperor, being desirous that Kōbōdaishi should write the tablet for the great temple called Kongō-jo-ji, gave the tablet to a messenger and bade him carry it to Kōbōdaishi, that Kōbōdaishi might letter it. But when the Emperor's messenger, bearing the tablet, came near to the place where Kōbōdaishi dwelt, he found a river before him so much swollen by rain that no man might cross it. In a little while, however, Kōbōdaishi appeared upon the farther bank, and, hearing from the messenger what the Emperor desired, called to him to hold up the tablet. And the messenger did so; and Kōbōdaishi, from his place upon the farther bank, made the movements of the letters with his brush; and as fast as he made them they appeared upon the tablet which the messenger was holding up.

II.

Now in that time Kōbōdaishi was wont to meditate alone by the river-side; and one day, while so meditating, he was aware of a boy standing before him, gazing at him curiously. The garments of the boy were as the garments worn by the needy; but his face was beautiful. And while Kōbōdaishi wondered, the boy asked him: "Are you Kōbōdaishi, whom men call 'Gohitsu-Oshō,'—the priest who writes with five brushes at once?" And Kōbōdaishi answered: "I am he." Then said the boy: "If you be he, write, I pray you, upon the sky." And Kōbōdaishi, rising, took his brush, and made with it movements toward the sky, as if writing; and presently upon the face of the sky the letters appeared, most beautifully wrought. Then the boy said: "Now I shall

try;" and he wrote also upon the sky as Kōbōdaishi had done. And he said again to Kōbōdaishi: "I pray you, write for me,—write upon the surface of the river." Then Kōbōdaishi wrote upon the water a poem in praise of the water; and for a moment the characters remained, all beautiful, upon the face of the stream, as if they had fallen upon it like leaves; but presently they moved with the current and floated away. "Now I will try," said the boy; and he wrote upon the water the Dragon-character,—the character *Ryū*, in the writing which is called Sōsho, the "Grass-character;" and the character remained upon the flowing surface, and moved not. But Kōbōdaishi saw that the boy had not placed the *ten*, the little dot belonging to the character, beside it. And he asked the boy: "Why did you not put the *ten*?" "Oh, I forgot!" answered the boy; "please put it there for me," and Kōbōdaishi then made the dot. And, lo! the Dragon-character became a Dragon; and the Dragon moved terribly in the waters, and the sky darkened with thunder-clouds, and blazed with lightnings; and the Dragon ascended in a whirl of tempest to heaven.

Then Kōbōdaishi asked the boy: "Who are you?" And the boy made answer: "I am he whom men worship on the mountain Gotai; I am the Lord of Wisdom,—Monju Bosatsu!" And even as he spoke the boy became changed; and his beauty became luminous like the beauty of gods; and his limbs became radiant, shedding soft light about. And, smiling, he rose to heaven and vanished beyond the clouds.

III.

But Kōbōdaishi himself once forgot to put the *ten* beside the character *Ō* on the tablet which he painted with the name of the Gate Ō-Te-mon of the Emperor's palace. And the Emperor at Kyōto having asked him why he had not put the *ten* beside the character, Kōbōdaishi answered: "I forgot; but I will put it on now." Then the Emperor bade ladders be brought; for the tablet was already in place, high above the gate. But Kōbōdaishi, standing on the pavement before the gate, simply threw his brush at the tablet; and the brush, so thrown, made the *ten* there most admirably, and fell back into his hand.

Kōbōdaishi also painted the tablet of the gate called Ko-ka-mon of the Emperor's palace at Kyōto. Now there was a man, dwelling near that gate, whose name was Kino Momoye; and he ridiculed the characters which Kōbōdaishi had made, and pointed to one of them, saying: "Why, it looks like a swaggering wrestler!" But the same night Momoye dreamed that a wrestler had come to his bedside and leaped upon him, and was beating him with his fists. And, crying out with the pain of the blows, he awoke, and saw the wrestler rise in air, and change into the written character he had laughed at, and go back to the tablet over the gate.

And there was another writer, famed greatly for his skill, named Onomo Toku, who laughed at some characters on the tablet of the Gate Shukaku-mon, written by Kōbōdaishi; and he said, pointing to the character *Shu*: "Verily *shu* looks like the character 'rice.'" And that night he dreamed that the character he had mocked

at became a man; and that the man fell upon him and beat him, and jumped up and down upon his face many times,—even as a kometsuki, a rice-cleaner, leaps up and down to move the hammers that beat the rice,—saying the while: “Lo! I am the messenger of Kōbōdaishi!” And, waking, he found himself bruised and bleeding as one that had been grievously trampled.

And long after Kōbōdaishi’s death it was found that the names written by him on the two gates of the Emperor’s palace—Bi-fuku-mon, the Gate of Beautiful Fortune; and Ko-ka-mon, the Gate of Excellent Greatness—were well-nigh effaced by time. And the Emperor ordered a Dainagon,* whose name was Yukinari, to restore the tablets. But Yukinari was afraid to perform the command of the Emperor, by reason of what had befallen other men; and, fearing the divine anger of Kōbōdaishi, he made offerings, and prayed for some token of permission. And the same night, in a dream, Kōbōdaishi appeared to him, smiling gently, and said: “Do the work even as the Emperor desires, and have no fear.” So he restored the tablets in the first month of the fourth year of Kwanko, as is recorded in the book, Hon-cho-bun-sui.

And all these things have been related to me by my friend Akira.

* *Dainagon*, the title of a high officer in the ancient Imperial Court.

III.

KITZUKI: THE MOST ANCIENT SHRINE OF JAPAN.

SHINKOKU is the sacred name of Japan,—Shinkoku, “The Country of the Gods;” and of all Shinkoku the most holy ground is the land of Izumo. Hither from the blue Plain of High Heaven first came to dwell awhile the Earth-makers, Izanagi and Izanami, the parents of gods and of men; somewhere upon the border of this land was Izanami buried; and out of this land into the black realm of the dead did Izanagi follow after her, and seek in vain to bring her back again. And the tale of his descent into that strange nether world, and of what there befell him, is it not written in the Kojiki?* And of all legends primeval concerning the Underworld this story is one of the weirdest,—more weird than even the Assyrian legend of the Descent of Ishtar.

Even as Izumo is especially the province of the gods, and the place of the childhood of the race by whom Izanagi and Izanami are yet worshipped, so is Kitzuki of Izumo especially the city of the gods, and its imme-

* The most ancient book extant in the archaic tongue of Japan. It is the most sacred scripture of Shintō. It has been admirably translated, with copious notes and commentaries, by Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain, of Tōkyō.

memorial temple the earliest home of the ancient faith, the great religion of Shintō.

Now to visit Kitzuki has been my most earnest ambition since I learned the legends of the Kojiki concerning it; and this ambition has been stimulated by the discovery that very few Europeans have visited Kitzuki, and that none have been admitted into the great temple itself. Some, indeed, were not allowed even to approach the temple court. But I trust that I shall be somewhat more fortunate; for I have a letter of introduction from my dear friend Nishida Sentarō, who is also a personal friend of the high pontiff of Kitzuki. I am thus assured that even should I not be permitted to enter the temple,—a privilege accorded to but few among the Japanese themselves,—I shall at least have the honour of an interview with the Guji, or Spiritual Governor of Kitzuki, Senke Takanori, whose princely family trace back their descent to the Goddess of the Sun.*

I.

I leave Matsue for Kitzuki early in the afternoon of a beautiful September day; taking passage upon a tiny steamer in which everything, from engines to awnings, is lilliputian. In the cabin one must kneel. Under the awnings one cannot possibly stand upright. But the miniature craft is neat and pretty as a toy model, and

* The genealogy of the family is published in a curious little book with which I was presented at Kitzuki. Senke Takanori is the eighty-first Pontiff Governor (formerly called *Kokuzō*) of Kitzuki. His lineage is traced back through sixty-five generations of Kokuzō and sixteen generations of earthly deities to Ama-terasu and her brother Susanoō-no-mikoto.

moves with surprising swiftness and steadiness. A handsome naked boy is busy serving the passengers with cups of tea and with cakes, and setting little charcoal furnaces before those who desire to smoke: for all of which a payment of about three quarters of a cent is expected.

I escape from the awnings to climb upon the cabin roof for a view; and the view is indescribably lovely. Over the lucent level of the lake we are steaming toward a far-away heaping of beautiful shapes, coloured with that strangely delicate blue which tints all distances in the Japanese atmosphere,—shapes of peaks and headlands looming up from the lake verge against a porcelain-white horizon. They show no details whatever. Silhouettes only they are—masses of absolutely pure colour. To left and right, framing in the Shinjiko, are superb green surgings of wooded hills. Great Yakuno-San is the loftiest mountain before us, northwest. Southeast, behind us, the city has vanished; but proudly towering beyond looms Daisen,—enormous, ghostly blue and ghostly white, lifting the cusps of its dead crater into the region of eternal snow. Over all arches a sky of colour faint as a dream.

There seems to be a sense of divine magic in the very atmosphere, through all the luminous day, brooding over the vapoury land, over the ghostly blue of the flood,—a sense of Shintō. With my fancy full of the legends of the Kojiki, the rhythmic chant of the engines comes to my ears as the rhythm of a Shintō ritual mingled with the names of gods:—

*Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami,
Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami.*

II.

The great range on the right grows loftier as we steam on; and its hills, always slowly advancing toward us, begin to reveal all the rich details of their foliage. And lo! on the tip of one grand wood-clad peak is visible against the pure sky the many-angled roof of a great Buddhist temple. That is the temple of Ichibata, upon the mountain Ichibata-yama, the temple of Yakushi-Nyorai, the Physician of Souls. But at Ichibata he reveals himself more specially as the healer of bodies, the Buddha who giveth sight unto the blind. It is believed that whosoever has an affection of the eyes will be made well by praying earnestly at that great shrine; and thither from many distant provinces do afflicted thousands make pilgrimage, ascending the long weary mountain path and the six hundred and forty steps of stone leading to the windy temple court upon the summit, whence may be seen one of the loveliest landscapes in Japan. There the pilgrims wash their eyes with the water of the sacred spring, and kneel before the shrine and murmur the holy formula of Ichibata: "*On-koro-koro-sendai-matōki-sowaka*,"—words of which the meaning has long been forgotten, like that of many a Buddhist invocation; Sanscrit words transliterated into Chinese, and thence into Japanese, which are understood by learned priests alone, yet are known by heart throughout the land, and uttered with the utmost fervour of devotion.

I descend from the cabin roof, and squat upon the deck, under the awnings, to have a smoke with Akira. And I ask:—

“How many Buddhas are there, O Akira? Is the number of the Enlightened known?”

“Countless the Buddhas are,” makes answer Akira; “yet there is truly but one Buddha; the many are forms only: Each of us contains a future Buddha. Alike we all are except in that we are more or less unconscious of the truth. But the vulgar may not understand these things, and so seek refuge in symbols and in forms.”

“And the Kami,—the deities of Shintō?”

“Of Shintō I know little. But there are eight hundred myriads of Kami in the Plain of High Heaven,—so says the Ancient Book. Of these, three thousand one hundred and thirty and two dwell in the various provinces of the land; being enshrined in two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one temples. And the tenth month of our year is called the ‘No-God-month,’ because in that month all the deities leave their temples to assemble in the province of Izumo, at the great temple of Kitzuki; and for the same reason that month is called in Izumo, and only in Izumo, the ‘God-is-month.’ But educated persons sometimes call it the ‘God-present-festival,’ using Chinese words. Then it is believed the serpents come from the sea to the land, and coil upon the sambo, which is the table of the gods, for the serpents announce the coming; and the Dragon-King sends messengers to the temples of Izanagi and Izanami, the parents of gods and men.”

“O Akira, many millions of Kami there must be of whom I shall always remain ignorant, for there is a limit to the power of memory; but tell me something of the gods whose names are most seldom uttered, the deities of strange places and of strange things, the most extraordinary gods.”

“You cannot learn much about them from me,”

replies Akira. "You will have to ask others more learned than I. But there are gods with whom it is not desirable to become acquainted. Such are the God of Poverty, and the God of Hunger, and the God of Penuriousness, and the God of Hindrances and Obstacles. These are of dark colour, like the clouds of gloomy days, and their faces are like the faces of gaki."*

"With the God of Hindrances and Obstacles, O Akira, I have had more than a passing acquaintance. Tell me of the others."

"I know little about any of them," answers Akira, "excepting Bimbogami. It is said there are two gods who always go together,—Fuku-no-Kami, who is the God of Luck, and Bimbogami, who is the God of Poverty. The first is white, and the second is black."

"Because the last," I venture to interrupt, "is only the shadow of the first. Fuku-no Kami is the Shadow-caster, and Bimbogami the Shadow; and I have observed, in wandering about this world, that wherever the one goeth, eternally followeth after him the other."

Akira refuses his assent to this interpretation, and resumes:—

"When Bimbogami once begins to follow anyone it is extremely difficult to be free from him again. In the village of Umitsu, which is in the province of Omi, and not far from Kyōto, there once lived a Buddhist priest who during many years was grievously tormented by Bimbogami. He tried oftentimes without avail to drive him away; then he strove to deceive him by proclaiming

* In Sanscrit *pretas*. The gaki are the famished ghosts of that Circle of Torment in hell whereof the penance is hunger; and the mouths of some are "smaller than the points of needles."

aloud to all the people that he was going to Kyōto. But instead of going to Kyōto he went to Tsuruga, in the province of Echizen; and when he reached the inn at Tsuruga there came forth to meet him a boy lean and wan like a gaki. The boy said to him, 'I have been waiting for you;—and the boy was Bimbogami.

"There was another priest who for sixty years had tried in vain to get rid of Bimbogami, and who resolved at last to go to a distant province. On the night after he had formed this resolve he had a strange dream, in which he saw a very much emaciated boy, naked and dirty, weaving sandals of straw (*waraji*), such as pilgrims and runners wear; and he made so many that the priest wondered, and asked him, 'For what purpose are you making so many sandals?' And the boy answered, 'I am going to travel with you. I am Bimbogami.'"

"Then is there no way, Akira, by which Bimbogami may be driven away?"

"It is written," replies Akira, "in the book called *Jizō-Kyō-Kosui* that the aged Enjobo, a priest dwelling in the province of Owari, was able to get rid of Bimbogami by means of a charm. On the last day of the last month of the year he and his disciples and other priests of the Shingon sect took branches of peach-trees and recited a formula, and then, with the branches, imitated the action of driving a person out of the temple, after which they shut all the gates and recited other formulas. The same night Enjobo dreamed of a skeleton priest in a broken temple weeping alone, and the skeleton priest said to him, 'After I had been with you for so many years, how could you drive me away?' But always thereafter until the day of his death, Enjobo lived in prosperity."

III.

For an hour and a half the ranges to left and right alternately recede and approach. Beautiful blue shapes glide toward us, change to green, and then, slowly drifting behind us, are all blue again. But the far mountains immediately before us—immovable, unchanging—always remain ghosts. Suddenly the little steamer turns straight into the land,—a land so low that it came into sight quite unexpectedly,—and we puff up a narrow stream between rice-fields to a queer, quaint, pretty village on the canal bank,—Shōbara. Here I must hire jinrikisha to take us to Kitzuki.

There is not time to see much of Shōbara if I hope to reach Kitzuki before bedtime, and I have only a flying vision of one long wide street (so picturesque that I wish I could pass a day in it), as our kuruma rush through the little town into the open country, into a vast plain covered with rice-fields. The road itself is only a broad dike, barely wide enough for two jinrikisha to pass each other upon it. On each side the superb plain is bounded by a mountain range shutting off the white horizon. There is a vast silence, an immense sense of dreamy peace, and a glorious soft vapour light over everything, as we roll into the country of Hyasugi to Kaminawoë. The jagged range on the left is Shusai-yama, all sharply green, with the giant Daikoku-yama overtopping all; and its peaks bear the names of gods. Much more remote, upon our right, enormous, pansy-purple, tower the shapes of the Kita-yama, or northern range; filing away in tremendous procession toward the sunset, fading more and more as they stretch west, to

vanish suddenly at last, after the ghostliest conceivable manner, into the uttermost day.

All this is beautiful; yet there is no change while hours pass. Always the way winds on through miles of rice-fields, white-speckled with paper-winged shafts which are arrows of prayer. Always the voice of frogs, —a sound as of infinite bubbling. Always the green range on the left, purple on the right, fading westward into a tall file of tinted spectres which always melt into nothing at last, as if they were made of air. The monotony of the scene is broken only by our occasional passing through some pretty Japanese village, or by the appearance of a curious statue or monument at an angle of the path, a roadside Jizō, or the grave of a wrestler, such as may be seen on the bank of the Hiagawa, a huge slab of granite sculptured with the words, "*Ikumo Matsu kikusuki.*"

But after reaching Kandogori, and passing over a broad but shallow river, a fresh detail appears in the landscape. Above the mountain chain on our left looms a colossal blue silhouette, almost saddle-shaped, recognisable by its outline as a once mighty volcano. It is now known by various names, but it was called in ancient times Sa-hime-yama; and it has its Shintō legend.

It is said that in the beginning the God of Izumo, gazing over the land, said, "This new land of Izumo is a land of but small extent, so I will make it a larger land by adding unto it." Having so said, he looked about him over to Korea, and there he saw land which was good for the purpose. With a great rope he dragged therefrom four islands, and added the land of them to Izumo. The first island was called Ya-o-yo-ne, and it

formed the land where Kitzuki now is. The second island was called Sada-no-kuni, and is at this day the site of the holy temple where all the gods do yearly hold their second assembly, after having first gathered together at Kitzuki. The third island was called in its new place Kura-mi-no-kuni, which now forms Shimane-gori. The fourth island became that place where stands the temple of the great god at whose shrine are delivered unto the faithful the charms which protect the rice-fields.*

Now in drawing these islands across the sea into their several places the god looped his rope over the mighty mountain of Daisen and over the mountain Sa-hime-yama; and they both bear the marks of that wondrous rope even unto this day. As for the rope itself, part of it was changed into the long island of ancient times** called Yomi-ga-hama, and a part into the Long Beach of Sono.

After we pass the Hori-kawa the road narrows and becomes rougher and rougher, but always draws nearer to the Kita-yama range. Toward sundown we have come close enough to the great hills to discern the details of their foliage. The path begins to rise; we ascend slowly through the gathering dusk. At last there appears before us a great multitude of twinkling lights. We have reached Kitzuki, the holy city.

* Mionoseki.

** Now solidly united with the mainland. Many extraordinary changes, of rare interest to the physiographer and geologist, have actually taken place along the coast of Izumo and in the neighbourhood of the great lake. Even now, each year some change occurs. I have seen several very strange ones.

IV.

Over a long bridge and under a tall torii we roll into upward-sloping streets. Like Enoshima, Kitzuki has a torii for its city gate; but the torii is not of bronze. Then a flying vision of open lamp-lighted shop-fronts, and lines of luminous shōji under high-tilted eaves, and Buddhist gateways guarded by lions of stone, and long, low, tile-coped walls of temple courts over-topped by garden shrubbery, and Shintō shrines prefaced by other tall torii; but no sign of the great temple itself. It lies toward the rear of the city proper, at the foot of the wooded mountains; and we are too tired and hungry to visit it now. So we halt before a spacious and comfortable-seeming inn,—the best, indeed, in Kitzuki,—and rest ourselves and eat, and drink saké out of exquisite little porcelain cups, the gift of some pretty singing-girl to the hotel. Thereafter, as it has become much too late to visit the Guji, I send to his residence by a messenger my letter of introduction, with an humble request in Akira's handwriting, that I may be allowed to present myself at the house before noon the next day.

Then the landlord of the hotel, who seems to be a very kindly person, comes to us with lighted paper lanterns, and invites us to accompany him to the Ohyashiro.

Most of the houses have already closed their wooden sliding doors for the night, so that the streets are dark, and the lanterns of our landlord indispensable; for there is no moon, and the night is starless. We walk along the main street for a distance of about six squares, and

then, making a turn, find ourselves before a superb bronze torii, the gateway to the great temple avenue.

V.

Effacing colours and obliterating distances, night always magnifies by suggestion the aspect of large spaces and the effect of large objects. Viewed by the vague light of paper lanterns, the approach to the great shrine is an imposing surprise,—such a surprise that I feel regret at the mere thought of having to see it to-morrow by disenchanted day: a superb avenue lined with colossal trees, and ranging away out of sight under a succession of giant torii, from which are suspended enormous shimenawa, well worthy the grasp of that Heavenly-Hand-Strength Deity whose symbols they are. But, more than by the torii and their festooned symbols, the dim majesty of the huge avenue is enhanced by the prodigious trees,—many perhaps thousands of years old, —gnarled pines whose shaggy summits are lost in darkness. Some of the mighty trunks are surrounded with a rope of straw: these trees are sacred. The vast roots, far-reaching in every direction, look in the lantern-light like a writhing and crawling of dragons.

The avenue is certainly not less than a quarter of a mile in length; it crosses two bridges and passes between two sacred groves. All the broad lands on either side of it belong to the temple. Formerly no foreigner was permitted to pass beyond the middle torii. The avenue terminates at a lofty wall pierced by a gateway resembling the gateways of Buddhist temple courts, but very massive. This is the entrance to the outer court; the

ponderous doors are still open, and many shadowy figures are passing in or out.

Within the court all is darkness, against which pale yellow lights are gliding to and fro like a multitude of enormous fireflies,—the lanterns of pilgrims. I can distinguish only the looming of immense buildings to left and right, constructed with colossal timbers. Our guide traverses a very large court, passes into a second, and halts before an imposing structure whose doors are still open. Above them, by the lantern glow, I can see a marvellous frieze of dragons and water, carved in some rich wood by the hand of a master. Within I can see the symbols of Shintō, in a side shrine on the left; and directly before us the lanterns reveal a surface of matted floor vaster than anything I had expected to find. Therefrom I can divine the scale of the edifice which I suppose to be the temple. But the landlord tells us this is not the temple, but only the *Haiden* or Hall of Prayer, before which the people make their orisons. By day, through the open doors, the temple can be seen. But we cannot see it to-night, and but few visitors are permitted to go in. "The people do not enter even the court of the great shrine, for the most part," interprets Akira; "they pray before it at a distance. Listen!"

All about me in the shadow I hear a sound like the plashing and dashing of water,—the clapping of many hands in Shintō prayer.

"But this is nothing," says the landlord; "there are but few here now. Wait until to-morrow, which is a festival day."

As we wend our way back along the great avenue, under the torii and the giant trees, Akira interprets for

me what our landlord tells him about the sacred serpent.

"The little serpent," he says, "is called by the people the august Dragon-Serpent; for it is sent by the Dragon-King to announce the coming of the gods. The sea darkens and rises and roars before the coming of Ryū-ja-Sama. Ryū-ja-Sama we call it because it is the messenger of Ryūgū-jō, the palace of the dragons; but it is also called Hakuja, or the White Serpent."*

"Does the little serpent come to the temple of its own accord?"

"Oh, no. It is caught by the fishermen. And only one can be caught in a year, because only one is sent; and whoever catches it and brings it either to the Kitzukino-oho-yashiro, or to the temple Sadajinja, where the

* The Hakuja, or White Serpent, is also the servant of Benten, or Ben-zai-ten, Goddess of Love, of Beauty, of Eloquence, and of the Sea. "The Hakuja has the face of an ancient man, with white eyebrows, and wears upon its head a crown." Both goddess and serpent can be identified with ancient Indian mythological beings, and Buddhism first introduced both into Japan. Among the people, especially perhaps in Izumo, certain divinities of Buddhism are often identified, or rather confused, with certain Kami, in popular worship and parlance.

Since this sketch was written, I have had opportunity of seeing a Ryū-ja within a few hours after its capture. It was between two and three feet long, and about one inch in diameter at its thickest girth. The upper part of the body was a very dark brown, and the belly yellowish white; toward the tail there were some beautiful yellowish mottlings. The body was not cylindrical, but curiously four-sided,—like those elaborately woven whip-lashes which have four edges. The tail was flat and triangular, like that of certain fish. A Japanese teacher, Mr. Watanabe, of the Normal School of Matsue, identified the little creature as a hydrophid of the species called *Pelamis bicolor*. It is so seldom seen, however, that I think the foregoing superficial description of it may not be without interest to some readers.

gods hold their second assembly during the Kami-ari-zuki, receives one *hyō** of rice in recompense. It costs much labour and time to catch a serpent; but whoever captures one is sure to become rich in after time."**

"There are many deities enshrined at Kitzuki, are there not?" I ask.

"Yes; but the great deity of Kitzuki is Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami,*** whom the people more commonly call Daikoku. Here also is worshipped his son, whom many call Ebisu. These deities are usually pictured together: Daikoku seated upon bales of rice, holding the Red Sun against his breast with one hand, and in the other grasping the magical mallet of which a single stroke gives wealth; and Ebisu bearing a fishing-rod, and holding under his arm a great tai-fish. These gods are always

* *Ippyo*, one *hyō*; $2\frac{1}{2}$ *hyō* make one *koku* = 5.13 bushels. The word *hyō* means also the bag made to contain one *hyō*.

** Either at Kitzuki or at Sada it is possible sometimes to buy a serpent. On many a "household-god-shelf" in Matsue the little serpent may be seen. I saw one that had become brittle and black with age, but was excellently preserved by some process of which I did not learn the nature. It had been admirably posed in a tiny wire cage, made to fit exactly into a small shrine of white wood, and must have been, when alive, about two feet four inches in length. A little lamp was lighted daily before it, and some Shintō formula recited by the poor family to whom it belonged.

*** Translated by Professor Chamberlain the "Deity Master-of-the-Great-Land,"—one of the most ancient divinities of Japan, but in popular worship confounded with Daikoku, 'God of Wealth. His son, Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, is similarly confounded with Ebisu, or Yebisu, the patron of honest labour. The origin of the Shintō custom of clapping the hands in prayer is said by some Japanese writers to have been a sign given by Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami.

Both deities are represented by Japanese art in a variety of ways. Some of the twin images of them sold at Kitzuki are extremely pretty as well as curious.

represented with smiling faces; and both have great ears, which are the sign of wealth and fortune."

VI.

A little wearied by the day's journeying, I get to bed early, and sleep as dreamlessly as a plant until I am awakened about daylight by a heavy, regular, bumping sound, shaking the wooden pillow on which my ear rests, —the sound of the katsu of the kometsuki beginning his eternal labour of rice-cleaning. Then the pretty musume of the inn opens the chamber to the fresh mountain air and the early sun, rolls back all the wooden shutters into their casings behind the gallery, takes down the brown mosquito net, brings a hibachi with freshly kindled charcoal for my morning smoke, and trips away to get our breakfast.

Early as it is when she returns, she brings word that a messenger has already arrived from the Guji, Senke Takanori, high descendant of the Goddess of the Sun. The messenger is a dignified young Shintō priest, clad in the ordinary Japanese full costume, but wearing also a superb pair of blue silken hakama, or Japanese ceremonial trousers, widening picturesquely towards the feet. He accepts my invitation to a cup of tea, and informs me that his august master is waiting for us at the temple.

This is delightful news, but we cannot go at once. Akira's attire is pronounced by the messenger to be defective. Akira must don fresh white tabi and put on hakama before going into the august presence: no one may enter thereinto without hakama. Happily Akira is able to borrow a pair of hakama from the landlord; and,

after having arranged ourselves as neatly as we can, we take our way to the temple, guided by the messenger.

VII.

I am agreeably surprised to find, as we pass again under a magnificent bronze torii which I admired the night before, that the approaches to the temple lose very little of their imposing character when seen for the first time by sunlight. The majesty of the trees remains astonishing; the vista of the avenue is grand; and the vast spaces of groves and grounds to right and left are even more impressive than I had imagined. Multitudes of pilgrims are going and coming; but the whole population of a province might move along such an avenue without jostling. Before the gate of the first court a Shintō priest in full sacerdotal costume waits to receive us: an elderly man, with a pleasant kindly face. The messenger commits us to his charge, and vanishes through the gateway, while the elderly priest, whose name is Sasa, leads the way.

Already I can hear a heavy sound, as of surf, within the temple court; and as we advance the sound becomes sharper and recognisable—a volleying of hand-claps. And passing the great gate, I see thousands of pilgrims before the Haiden, the same huge structure which I visited last night. None enter there: all stand before the dragon-swarming doorway, and cast their offerings into the money-chest placed before the threshold; many making contribution of small coin, the very poorest throwing only a handful of rice into the box.* Then

* Very large donations are made to this temple by wealthy men. The wooden tablets without the Haiden, on which are re-

they clap their hands and bow their heads before the threshold, and reverently gaze through the Hall of Prayer at the loftier edifice, the Holy of Holies, beyond it. Each pilgrim remains but a little while, and claps his hands but four times; yet so many are coming and going that the sound of the clapping is like the sound of a cataract.

Passing by the multitude of worshippers to the other side of the Haiden, we find ourselves at the foot of a broad flight of iron-bound steps leading to the great sanctuary,—steps which I am told no European before me was ever permitted to approach. On the lower steps the priests of the temple, in full ceremonial costume, are waiting to receive us. Tall men they are, robed in violet and purple silks shot through with dragon-patterns in gold. Their lofty fantastic headdresses, their voluminous and beautiful costume, and the solemn immobility of their hierophantic attitudes make them at first sight seem marvellous statues only. Somehow or other there comes suddenly back to me the memory of a strange French print I used to wonder at when a child, representing a group of Assyrian astrologers. Only their eyes move as we approach. But as I reach the steps all simultaneously salute me with a most gracious bow, for I am the first foreign pilgrim to be honoured by the privilege of an interview in the holy shrine itself with the princely hierophant, their master, descendant of the Goddess of the Sun,—he who is still called by myriads of humble

corded the number of gifts and the names of the donors, mention several recent presents of 1000 yen, or dollars; and donations of 500 yen are not uncommon. The gift of a high civil official is rarely less than 50 yen.

worshippers in the remoter districts of this ancient province Ikigami, "the living deity." Then all become absolutely statuesque again.

I remove my shoes, and am about to ascend the steps, when the tall priest who first received us before the outer gate indicates, by a single significant gesture, that religion and ancient custom require me, before ascending to the shrine of the god, to perform the ceremonial ablution. I hold out my hands; the priest pours the pure water over them thrice from a ladle-shaped vessel of bamboo with a long handle, and then gives me a little blue towel to wipe them upon, a votive towel with mysterious white characters upon it. Then we all ascend; I feeling very much like a clumsy barbarian in my ungraceful foreign garb.

Pausing at the head of the steps, the priest inquires my rank in society. For at Kitzuki hierarchy and hierarchical forms are maintained with a rigidity as precise as in the period of the gods; and there are special forms and regulations for the reception of visitors of every social grade. I do not know what flattering statements Akira may have made about me to the good priest; but the result is that I can rank only as a common person,—which veracious fact doubtless saves me from some formalities which would have proved embarrassing, all ignorant as I still am of that finer and more complex etiquette in which the Japanese are the world's masters.

VIII.

The priest leads the way into a vast and lofty apartment opening for its entire length upon the broad gallery

to which the stairway ascends. I have barely time to notice, while following him, that the chamber contains three immense shrines, forming alcoves on two sides of it. Of these, two are veiled by white curtains reaching from ceiling to matting,—curtains decorated with perpendicular rows of black disks about four inches in diameter, each disk having in its centre a golden blossom. But from before the third shrine, in the farther angle of the chamber, the curtains have been withdrawn; and these are of gold brocade, and the shrine before which they hang is the chief shrine, that of Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami. Within are visible only some of the ordinary emblems of Shintō, and the exterior of that Holy of Holies into which none may look. Before it a long low bench, covered with strange objects, has been placed, with one end toward the gallery and one toward the alcove. At the end of this bench, near the gallery, I see a majestic bearded figure, strangely coifed and robed all in white, seated upon the matted floor in hierophantic attitude. Our priestly guide motions us to take our places in front of him and to bow down before him. For this is Senke Takanori, the Guji of Kitzuki, to whom even in his own dwelling none may speak save on bended knee, descendant of the Goddess of the Sun, and still by multitudes revered in thought as a being super-human. Prostrating myself before him, according to the customary code of Japanese politeness, I am saluted in return with that exquisite courtesy which puts a stranger immediately at ease. The priest who acted as our guide now sits down on the floor at the Guji's left hand; while the other priests, who followed us to the entrance of the sanctuary only, take their places upon the gallery without.

IX.

Senke Takanori is a youthful and powerful man. As he sits there before me in his immobile hieratic pose, with his strange lofty headdress, his heavy curling beard, and his ample snowy sacerdotal robe broadly spreading about him in statuesque undulations, he realises for me all that I had imagined, from the suggestion of old Japanese pictures, about the personal majesty of the ancient princes and heroes. The dignity alone of the man would irresistibly compel respect; but with that feeling of respect there also flashes through me at once the thought of the profound reverence paid him by the population of the most ancient province of Japan, the idea of the immense spiritual power in his hands, the tradition of his divine descent, the sense of the im-memorial nobility of his race;—and my respect deepens into a feeling closely akin to awe. So motionless he is that he seems a sacred statue only,—the temple image of one of his own deified ancestors. But the solemnity of the first few moments is agreeably broken by his first words, uttered in a low rich basso, while his dark, kindly eyes remain motionlessly fixed upon my face. Then my interpreter translates his greeting,—large fine phrases of courtesy,—to which I reply as I best know how, expressing my gratitude for the exceptional favour accorded me.

“You are, indeed,” he responds through Akira, “the first European ever permitted to enter into the Oho-yashiro. Other Europeans have visited Kitzuki and a few have been allowed to enter the temple court; but you only have been admitted into the dwelling of the god. In past years, some strangers who desired to visit

the temple out of common curiosity only were not allowed to approach even the court; but the letter of Mr. Nishida, explaining the object of your visit, has made it a pleasure for us to receive you thus."

Again I express my thanks; and after a second exchange of courtesies the conversation continues through the medium of Akira.

"Is not this great temple of Kitzuki," I inquire, "older than the temples of Ise?"

"Older by far," replies the Guji; "so old, indeed, that we do not well know the age of it. For it was first built by order of the Goddess of the Sun, in the time when deities alone existed. Then it was exceedingly magnificent; it was three hundred and twenty feet high. The beams and the pillars were larger than any existing timber could furnish; and the framework was bound together firmly with a rope made of *taku** fibre, one thousand fathoms long.

"It was first rebuilt in the time of the Emperor Sui-nin.** The temple so rebuilt by order of the Emperor Sui-nin was called the Structure of the Iron Rings, because the pieces of the pillars, which were composed of the wood of many great trees, had been bound fast together with huge rings of iron. This temple was also splendid, but far less splendid than the first, which had been built by the gods, for its height was only one hundred and sixty feet.

"A third time the temple was rebuilt, in the reign of the Empress Sai-mei; but this third edifice was only

* *Taku* is the Japanese name for the paper mulberry.

** See the curious legend in Professor Chamberlain's translation of the *Kojiki*.

eighty feet high. Since then the structure of the temple has never varied; and the plan then followed has been strictly preserved to the least detail in the construction of the present temple.

"The Oho-yashiro has been rebuilt twenty-eight times; and it has been the custom to rebuild it every sixty-one years. But in the long period of civil war it was not even repaired for more than a hundred years. In the fourth year of Tai-ei, one Amako Tsune Hisa, becoming Lord of Izumo, committed the great temple to the charge of a Buddhist priest, and even built pagodas about it, to the outrage of the holy traditions. But when the Amako family were succeeded by Moro Mototsugo, this latter purified the temple, and restored the ancient festivals and ceremonies which before had been neglected."

"In the period when the temple was built upon a larger scale," I ask, "were the timbers for its construction obtained from the forests of Izumo?"

The priest Sasa, who guided us into the shrine, makes answer:—

"It is recorded that on the fourth day of the seventh month of the third year of Ten-in one hundred large trees came floating to the seacoast of Kitzuki, and were stranded there by the tide. With these timbers the temple was rebuilt in the third year of Ei-kyu: and that structure was called the Building-of-the-Trees-which-came-floating. Also in the same third year of Ten-in, a great tree-trunk, one hundred and fifty feet long, was stranded on the seashore near a shrine called Ube-no-yashiro, at Miyanoshita-mura, which is in Inaba. Some people wanted to cut the tree; but they found a great serpent

coiled around it, which looked so terrible that they became frightened, and prayed to the deity of Ube-no-yashiro to protect them; and the deity revealed himself, and said: 'Whosoever the great temple in Izumo is to be rebuilt, one of the gods of each province sends timber for the building of it, and this time it is my turn. Build quickly, therefore, with that great tree which is mine.' And therewith the god disappeared. From these and from other records we learn that the deities have always superintended or aided the building of the great temple of Kitzuki."

"In what part of the Oho-yashiro," I ask, "do the august deities assemble during the Kami-ari-zuki?"

"On the east and west sides of the inner court," replies the priest Sasa, "there are two long buildings called the Jiu-ku-sha. These contain nineteen shrines, no one of which is dedicated to any particular god; and we believe it is in the Jiu-ku-sha that the gods assemble."

"And how many pilgrims from other provinces visit the great shrine yearly?" I inquire.

"About two hundred and fifty thousand," the Guji answers. "But the number increases or diminishes according to the condition of the agricultural classes; the more prosperous the season, the larger the number of pilgrims. It rarely falls below two hundred thousand."

X.

Many other curious things the Guji and his chief priest then related to me; telling me the sacred name of each of the courts, and of the fences and holy groves and the multitudinous shrines and their divinities; even the names of the great pillars of the temple, which are

nine in number, the central pillar being called the august Heart-Pillar of the Middle. All things within the temple grounds have sacred names, even the torii and the bridges.

The priest Sasa called my attention to the fact that the great shrine of Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami faces west, though the great temple faces east, like all Shintō temples. In the other two shrines of the same apartment, both facing east, are the first divine Kokuzō of Izumo, his seventeenth descendant, and the father of Nominosukune, wise prince and famous wrestler. For in the reign of the Emperor Sui-nin one Kehaya of Taima had boasted that no man alive was equal to himself in strength. Nominosukune, by the emperor's command, wrestled with Kehaya, and threw him down so mightily that Kehaya's ghost departed from him. This was the beginning of wrestling in Japan; and wrestlers still pray unto Nominosukune for power and skill.

There are so many other shrines that I could not enumerate the names of all their deities without wearying those readers unfamiliar with the traditions and legends of Shintō. But nearly all those divinities who appear in the legend of the Master of the Great Land are still believed to dwell here with him, and here their shrines are: the beautiful one, magically born from the jewel worn in the tresses of the Goddess of the Sun, and called by men the Torrent-Mist Princess;—and the daughter of the Lord of the World of Shadows, she who loved the Master of the Great Land, and followed him out of the place of ghosts to become his wife;—and the deity called “Wondrous-Eight-Spirits,” grandson of the “Deity of Water-Gates,” who first made a fire-drill and platters

of red clay for the august banquet of the god at Kitzuki; --and many of the heavenly kindred of these.

XL

The priest Sasa also tells me this:—

When Naomasu, grandson of the great Iyeyasu, and first daimyō of that mighty Matsudaira family who ruled Izumo for two hundred and fifty years, came to this province, he paid a visit to the Temple of Kitzuki, and demanded that the miya of the shrine within the shrine should be opened that he might look upon the sacred objects,—upon the shintai, or body of the deity. And this being an impious desire, both of the Kokuzō* unitedly protested against it. But despite their remonstrances and their pleadings, he persisted angrily in his demand, so that the priests found themselves compelled to open the shrine. And the miya being opened, Naomasu saw within it a great awabi** of nine holes, —so large that it concealed everything behind it. And when he drew still nearer to look, suddenly the awabi changed itself into a huge serpent more than fifty feet

* From a remote period there have been two Kokuzō in theory, although but one incumbent. Two branches of the same family claim ancestral right to the office,—the rival houses of Senke and Kitajima. The government has decided always in favour of the former; but the head of the Kitajima family has usually been appointed Vice-Kokuzō. A Kitajima to-day holds the lesser office.

The term Kokuzō is not, correctly speaking, a spiritual, but rather a temporal title. The Kokuzō has always been the emperor's deputy to Kitzuki,—the person appointed to worship the deity in the emperor's stead; but the real spiritual title of such a deputy is that still borne by the present Guji,—“Mitsuye-Shiro.”

** *Haliotis tuberculata*, or “sea-ear.” The curious shell is pierced with a row of holes, which vary in number with the age and size of the animal it shields.

in length;*—and it massed its black coils before the opening of the shrine, and hissed like the sound of raging fire, and looked so terrible, that Naomasu and those with him fled away,—having been able to see naught else. And ever thereafter Naomasu feared and reverenced the god.

XII.

The Guji then calls my attention to the quaint relics lying upon the long low bench between us, which is covered with white silk: a metal mirror, found in preparing the foundation of the temple when rebuilt many hundred years ago; magatama jewels of onyx and jasper; a Chinese flute made of jade; a few superb swords, the gifts of shōguns and emperors; helmets of splendid antique workmanship; and a bundle of enormous arrows with double-pointed heads of brass, fork-shaped and keenly edged.

After I have looked at these relics and learned something of their history, the Guji rises and says to me, "Now we will show you the ancient fire-drill of Kitzuki, with which the sacred fire is kindled."

Descending the steps, we pass again before the Haiden, and enter a spacious edifice on one side of the court, of nearly equal size with the Hall of Prayer. Here I am agreeably surprised to find a long handsome mahogany table at one end of the main apartment into which we are ushered, and mahogany chairs placed all about it for the reception of guests. I am motioned to one chair, my interpreter to another; and the Guji and his priests take their seats also at the table. Then an

* Literally, "ten hirō," or Japanese fathoms.

attendant sets before me a handsome bronze stand about three feet long, on which rests an oblong something carefully wrapped in snow-white cloths. The Guji removes the wrappings; and I behold the most primitive form of fire-drill known to exist in the Orient * It is simply a very thick piece of solid white plank, about two and a half feet long, with a line of holes drilled along its upper edge, so that the upper part of each hole breaks through the sides of the plank. The sticks which produce the fire, when fixed in the holes and rapidly rubbed between the palms of the hands, are made of a lighter kind of white wood; they are about two feet long, and as thick as a common lead pencil.

While I am yet examining this curious simple utensil, the invention of which tradition ascribes to the gods, and modern science to the earliest childhood of the human race, a priest places upon the table a light, large wooden box, about three feet long, eighteen inches wide, and four inches high at the sides, but higher in the middle, as the top is arched like the shell of a tortoise. This object is made of the same hinoki wood as the drill; and two long slender sticks are laid beside it. I at first suppose it to be another fire-drill. But no human being could guess what it really is. It is called the kotoita, and is one of the most primitive of musical instruments; the little sticks are used to strike it. At a sign from the Guji two priests place the box upon the floor, seat themselves on either side of it, and taking up the

* The fire-drill used at the Shintō temples of Ise is far more complicated in construction, and certainly represents a much more advanced stage of mechanical knowledge than the Kitzuki fire-drill indicates.

little sticks begin to strike the lid with them, alternately and slowly, at the same time uttering a most singular and monotonous chant. One intones only the sounds, "*Ang! ang!*" and the other responds, "*Ong! ong!*" The koto-ita gives out a sharp, dead, hollow sound as the sticks fall upon it in time to each utterance of "*Ang! ang!*" "*Ong! ong!*"*

XIII.

These things I learn:—

Each year the temple receives a new fire-drill; but the fire-drill is never made in Kitzuki, but in Kumano, where the traditional regulations as to the manner of making it have been preserved from the time of the gods. For the first Kokuzō of Izumo, on becoming pontiff, received the fire-drill for the great temple from the hands of the deity who was the younger brother of the Sun Goddess, and is now enshrined at Kumano. And from his time the fire-drills for the Oho-yashiro of Kitzuki have been made only at Kumano.

Until very recent times the ceremony of delivering the new fire-drill to the Guji of Kitzuki always took place at the great temple of Oba, on the occasion of the festival called Unohi-matsuri. This ancient festival, which used to be held in the eleventh month, became obsolete after the Revolution everywhere except at Oba in Izumo, where Izanami-no-Kami, the mother of gods and men, is enshrined.

* During a subsequent visit to Kitzuki I learned that the koto-ita is used only as a sort of primitive "tuning" instrument: it gives the right tone for the true chant which I did not hear during my first visit. The true chant, an ancient Shintō hymn, is always preceded by the performance above described.

Once a year, on this festival, the Kokuzō always went to Oba, taking with him a gift of double rice-cakes. At Oba he was met by a personage called the Kame-da-yu, who brought the fire-drill from Kumano and delivered it to the priests at Oba. According to tradition, the Kame-da-yu had to act a somewhat ludicrous *rôle*, so that no Shintō priest ever cared to perform the part, and a man was hired for it. The duty of the Kame-da-yu was to find fault with the gift presented to the temple by the Kokuzō; and in this district of Japan there is still a proverbial saying about one who is prone to find fault without reason, "He is like the Kame-da-yu."

The Kame-da-yu would inspect the rice-cakes and begin to criticise them. "They are much smaller this year," he would observe, "than they were last year." The priests would reply: "Oh, you are honourably mistaken; they are in truth very much larger." "The colour is not so white this year as it was last year; and the rice-flour is not finely ground." For all these imaginary faults of the mochi the priests would offer elaborate explanations or apologies.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the sakaki branche, used in it were eagerly bid for, and sold at high prices, being believed to possess talismanic virtues.

XIV.

It nearly always happened that there was a great storm either on the day the Kokuzō went to Oba, or upon the day he returned therefrom. The journey had to be made during what is in Izumo the most stormy season (December by the new calendar). But in popular belief these storms were in some tremendous way con-

nected with the divine personality of the Kokuzō, whose attributes would thus appear to present some curious analogy with those of the Dragon-God. Be that as it may, the great periodical storms of the season are still in this province called Kokuzō-aré;* and it is still the custom in Izumo to say merrily to the guest who arrives or departs in a time of tempest, "Why, you are like the Kokuzō!"

XV.

The Guji waves his hand, and from the farther end of the huge apartment there comes a sudden burst of strange music,—a sound of drums and bamboo flutes; and turning to look, I see the musicians, three men, seated upon the matting, and a young girl with them. At another sign from the Guji the girl rises. She is bare-footed and robed in snowy white, a virgin priestess. But below the hem of the white robe I see the gleam of hakama of crimson silk. She advances to a little table in the middle of the apartment, upon which a queer instrument is lying, shaped somewhat like a branch with twigs bent downward, from each of which hangs a little bell. Taking this curious object in both hands, she begins a sacred dance, unlike anything I ever saw before. Her every movement is a poem, because she is very graceful; and yet her performance could scarcely be called a dance, as we understand the word; it is rather a light swift walk within a circle, during which she shakes the instrument at regular intervals, making all the little bells ring. Her face remains impassive as a beautiful mask, placid and sweet as the face of a

* The tempest of the Kokuzō.

dreaming Kwannon; and her white feet are pure of line as the feet of a marble nymph. Altogether, with her snowy raiment and white flesh and passionless face, she seems rather a beautiful living statue than a Japanese maiden. And all the while the weird flutes sob and shrill, and the muttering of the drums is like an incantation.

What I have seen is called the Dance of the Miko, the Divineress.

XVI.

Then we visit the other edifices belonging to the temple: the storehouse; the library; the hall of assembly, a massive structure two storeys high, where may be seen the portraits of the Thirty-Six Great Poets, painted by Tosano Mitsu Oki more than a thousand years ago, and still in an excellent state of preservation. Here we are also shown a curious magazine, published monthly by the temple,—a record of Shintō news, and a medium for the discussion of questions relating to the archaic texts.

After we have seen all the curiosities of the temple, the Guji invites us to his private residence near the temple to show us other treasures,—letters of Yoritomo, of Hideyoshi, of Ieyasu; documents in the handwriting of the ancient emperors and the great shōguns, hundreds of which precious manuscripts he keeps in a cedar chest. In case of fire the immediate removal of this chest to a place of safety would be the first duty of the servants of the household.

Within his own house, the Guji, attired in ordinary Japanese full dress only, appears no less dignified as a private gentleman than he first seemed as pontiff in his voluminous snowy robe. But no host could be more

kindly or more courteous or more generous. I am also much impressed by the fine appearance of his suite of young priests, now dressed, like himself, in the national costume; by the handsome, aquiline, aristocratic faces, totally different from those of ordinary Japanese,—faces suggesting the soldier rather than the priest. One young man has a superb pair of thick black moustaches, which is something rarely to be seen in Japan.

At parting our kind host presents me with the ofuda, or sacred charms given to pilgrims,—two pretty images of the chief deities of Kitzuki,—and a number of documents relating to the history of the temple and of its treasures.

XVII.

Having taken our leave of the kind Guji and his suite, we are guided to Inasa-no-hama, a little sea-bay at the rear of the town, by the priest Sasa, and another kannushi. This priest Sasa is a skilled poet and a man of deep learning in Shintō history and the archaic texts of the sacred books. He relates to us many curious legends as we stroll along the shore.

This shore, now a popular bathing resort,—bordered with airy little inns and pretty tea-houses,—is called Inasa because of a Shintō tradition that here the god Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami, the Master-of-the-Great-Land, was first asked to resign his dominion over the land of Izumo in favour of Masa-ka-a-katsu-kachi-hayabi-ame-no-oshi-ho-mimi-no-mikoto; the word Inasa signifying “Will you consent or not?”* In the thirty-second section of

* That is, according to Motoōri, the commentator. Or more briefly: “No or yes?” This is, according to Professor Chamberlain,

the first volume of the Kojiki the legend is written: I cite a part thereof:

"The two deities (Tori-bune-no-Kami and Take-mika-dzu-chi-no-wo-no-Kami), descending to the little shore of Inasa in the land of Izumo, drew their swords ten handbreadths long, and stuck them upside down on the crest of a wave, and seated themselves cross-legged upon the points of the swords, and asked the Deity Master-of-the-Great-Land, saying: 'The Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity and the High-Integrating-Deity have charged us and sent us to ask, saying: "We have deigned to charge our august child with thy dominion, as the land which he should govern. So how is thy heart?"' He replied, saying: 'I am unable to say. My son Ya-he-koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami will be the one to tell you.' . . . So they asked the Deity again, saying: 'Thy son Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami has now spoken thus. Hast thou other sons who should speak?' He spoke again, saying: 'There is my other son, Take-mi-na-gata-no-Kami.' . . . While he was thus speaking the Deity Take-mi-na-gata-no-Kami came up [from the sea], bearing on the tips of his fingers a rock which it would take a thousand men to lift, and said, 'I should like to have a trial of strength.'"

Here, close to the beach, stands a little miya called Inasa-no-kami-no-yashiro, or, the Temple of the God of Inasa; and therein Take-mika-dzu-chi-no-Kami, who conquered in the trial of strength, is enshrined. And near the shore the great rock which Take-mi-na-gata-no-

a mere fanciful etymology; but it is accepted by Shintō faith, and for that reason only is here given.

Kami lifted upon the tips of his fingers, may be seen rising from the water. And it is called Chihiki-noiha.

We invite the priests to dine with us at one of the little inns facing the breezy sea; and there we talk about many things, but particularly about Kitzuki and the Kokuzō.

XVIII.

Only a generation ago the religious power of the Kokuzō extended over the whole of the province of the gods; he was in fact as well as in name the Spiritual Governor of Izumo. His jurisdiction does not now extend beyond the limits of Kitzuki, and his correct title is no longer Kokuzō, but Guji.* Yet to the simple-hearted people of remoter districts he is still a divine or semi-divine being, and is mentioned by his ancient title, the inheritance of his race from the epoch of the gods. How profound a reverence was paid to him in former ages can scarcely be imagined by any who have not long lived among the country folk of Izumo. Outside of Japan perhaps no human being, except the Dalai Lama of Thibet, was so humbly venerated and so religiously beloved. Within Japan itself only the Son of Heaven, the "Tenshi-Sama," standing as mediator "between his people and the Sun," received like homage; but the worshipful reverence paid to the Mikado was paid to a dream rather than to a person, to a name rather than to a reality, for the Tenshi-Sama was ever

* The title of Kokuzō, indeed, still exists, but it is now merely honorary, having no official duties connected with it. It is actually borne by Baron Senke, the father of Senke Takanori, residing in the capital. The active religious duties of the Mitsuye-shiro now devolve upon the Guji.

invisible as a deity "divinely retired," and in popular belief no man could look upon his face and live.* Invisibility and mystery vastly enhanced the divine legend of the Mikado. But the Kokuzō, within his own province, though visible to the multitude and often journeying among the people, received almost equal devotion; so that his material power, though rarely, if ever, exercised, was scarcely less than that of the Daimyō of Izumo himself. It was indeed large enough to render him a person with whom the shōgunate would have deemed it wise policy to remain upon good terms. An ancestor of the present Guji even defied the great Taikō Hideyoshi, refusing to obey his command to furnish troops with the haughty answer that he would receive no order from a man of common birth.** This defiance cost the family the loss of a large part of its estates by confiscation, but the real power of the Kokuzō remained unchanged until the period of the new civilisation.

Out of many hundreds of stories of a similar nature, two little traditions may be cited as illustrations of the reverence in which the Kokuzō was formerly held.

It is related that there was a man who, believing himself to have become rich by favour of the Daikoku of Kitzuki, desired to express his gratitude by a gift of robes to the Kokuzō. The Kokuzō courteously declined the proffer; but the pious worshipper persisted in his purpose, and ordered a tailor to make the robes. The

* As late as 1890 I was told by a foreign resident, who had travelled much in the interior of the country, that in certain districts many old people may be met with who still believe that to see the face of the emperor is "to become a Buddha;" that is, to die.

** Hideyoshi, as is well known, was not of princely extraction.

tailor, having made them, demanded a price that almost took his patron's breath away. Being asked to give his reason for demanding such a price, he made answer: "Having made robes for the Kokuzō, I cannot hereafter make garments for any other person. Therefore I must have money enough to support me for the rest of my life."

The second story dates back to about one hundred and seventy years ago.

Among the samurai of the Matsue clan in the time of Nobukori, fifth daimyō of the Matsudaira family, there was one Sugihara Kitoji, who was stationed in some military capacity at Kitzuki. He was a great favourite with the Kokuzō, and used often to play at chess with him. During a game, one evening, this officer suddenly became as one paralysed, unable to move or speak. For a moment all was anxiety and confusion; but the Kokuzō said: "I know the cause. My friend was smoking, and although smoking disagrees with me, I did not wish to spoil his pleasure by telling him so. But the Kami, seeing that I felt ill, became angry with him. Now I shall make him well." Whereupon the Kokuzō uttered some magical word, and the officer was immediately as well as before.

XIX.

Once more we are journeying through the silence of this holy land of mists and of legends; wending our way between green leagues of ripening rice white-sprinkled with arrows of prayer, between the far processions of blue and verdant peaks whose names are the names of gods. We have left Kitzuki far behind. But as in a

dream I still see the mighty avenue, the long succession of torii with their colossal shimenawa, the majestic face of the Guji, the kindly smile of the priest Sasa, and the girl priestess in her snowy robes dancing her beautiful ghostly dance. It seems to me that I can still hear the sound of the clapping of hands, like the crashing of a torrent. I cannot suppress some slight exultation at the thought that I have been allowed to see what no other foreigner has been privileged to see—the interior of Japan's most ancient shrine, and those sacred utensils and quaint rites of primitive worship so well worthy the study of the anthropologist and the evolutionist.

But to have seen Kitzuki as I saw it is also to have seen something much more than a single wonderful temple. To see Kitzuki is to see the living centre of Shintō, and to feel the life-pulse of the ancient faith, throbbing as mightily in this nineteenth century as ever in that unknown past whereof the Kojiki itself, though written in a tongue no longer spoken, is but a modern record.* Buddhism, changing form or slowly decaying through the centuries, might seem doomed to pass away at last from this Japan to which it came only as an alien faith; but Shintō, unchanging and vitally unchanged, still remains all dominant in the land of its birth, and only seems to gain in power and dignity with time.**

* The Kojiki dates back, as a written work, only to A. D. 712. But its legends and records are known to have existed in the form of oral literature from a much more ancient time.

** In certain provinces of Japan Buddhism practically absorbed Shintō in other centuries, but in Izumo Shintō absorbed Buddhism; and now that Shintō is supported by the state there is a visible tendency to eliminate from its cult certain elements of Buddhist origin.

Buddhism has a voluminous theology, a profound philosophy, a literature vast as the sea. Shintō has no philosophy, no code of ethics, no metaphysics; and yet, by its very immateriality, it can resist the invasion of Occidental religious thought as no other Orient faith can. Shintō extends a welcome to Western science, but remains the irresistible opponent of Western religion; and the foreign zealots who would strive against it are astounded to find the power that foils their uttermost efforts indefinable as magnetism and invulnerable as air. Indeed the best of our scholars have never been able to tell us what Shintō is. To some it appears to be merely ancestor-worship, to others ancestor-worship combined with nature-worship; to others, again, it seems to be no religion at all; to the missionary of the more ignorant class it is the worst form of heathenism. Doubtless the difficulty of explaining Shintō has been due simply to the fact that the sinologists have sought for the source of it in books: in the Kojiki and the Nihongi, which are its histories; in the Norito, which are its prayers; in the commentaries of Motowori and Hirata, who were its greatest scholars. But the reality of Shintō lives not in books, nor in rites, nor in commandments, but in the national heart, of which it is the highest emotional religious expression, immortal and ever young. Far underlying all the surface crop of quaint superstitions and artless myths and fantastic magic there thrills a mighty spiritual force, the whole soul of a race with all its impulses and powers and intuitions. He who would know what Shintō is must learn to know that mysterious soul in which the sense of beauty and the power of art and the fire of heroism and magnetism of loyalty and

the emotion of faith have become inherent, immanent, unconscious, instinctive.

Trusting to know something of that Oriental soul in whose joyous love of nature and of life even the unlearned may discern a strange likeness to the soul of the old Greek race, I trust also that I may presume some day to speak of the great living power of that faith now called Shintō, but more anciently Kami-no-michi, or "The Way of the Gods."

IV.

IN THE CAVE OF THE CHILDREN'S GHOSTS.

I.

It is forbidden to go to Kaka if there be wind enough "to move three hairs."

Now an absolutely windless day is rare on this wild western coast. Over the Japanese Sea, from Korea, or China, or boreal Siberia, some west or northwest breeze is nearly always blowing. So that I have had to wait many long months for a good chance to visit Kaka.

Taking the shortest route, one goes first to Mitsura from Matsue, either by kuruma or on foot. By kuruma this little journey occupies nearly two hours and a half, though the distance is scarcely seven miles, the road being one of the worst in all Izumo. You leave Matsue to enter at once into a broad plain, level as a lake, all occupied by rice-fields and walled in by wooded hills. The path, barely wide enough for a single vehicle, traverses this green desolation, climbs the heights beyond it, and descends again into another and a larger level of rice-fields, surrounded also by hills. The path over the second line of hills is much steeper; then a third

rice-plain must be crossed and a third chain of green altitudes, lofty enough to merit the name of mountains. Of course one must make the ascent on foot: it is no small labour for a kurumaya to pull even an empty kuruma up to the top; and how he manages to do so without breaking the little vehicle is a mystery, for the path is stony and rough as the bed of a torrent. A tiresome climb I find it; but the landscape view from the summit is more than compensation.

Then descending, there remains a fourth and last wide level of rice-fields to traverse. The absolute flatness of the great plains between the ranges, and the singular way in which these latter "fence off" the country into sections, are matters for surprise even in a land of surprises like Japan. Beyond the fourth rice-valley there is a fourth hill-chain, lower and richly wooded, on reaching the base of which the traveller must finally abandon his kuruma, and proceed over the hills on foot. Behind them lies the sea. But the very worst bit of the journey now begins. The path makes an easy winding ascent between bamboo growths and young pine and other vegetation for a shaded quarter of a mile, passing before various little shrines and pretty homesteads surrounded by high-hedged gardens. Then it suddenly breaks into steps, or rather ruins of steps—partly hewn in the rock, partly built, everywhere breached and worn—which descend, all edgeless, in a manner amazingly precipitous, to the village of Mitsu-ura. With straw sandals, which never slip, the country folk can nimbly hurry up or down such a path; but with foreign foot-gear one slips at nearly every step; and when you reach the bottom at last, the wonder of how you managed to

get there, even with the assistance of your faithful kurumaya, keeps you for a moment quite unconscious of the fact that you are already in Mitsu-ura.

II.

Mitsu-ura stands with its back to the mountains, at the end of a small deep bay hemmed in by very high cliffs. There is only one narrow strip of beach at the foot of the heights; and the village owes its existence to that fact, for beaches are rare on this part of the coast. Crowded between the cliffs and the sea, the houses have a painfully compressed aspect; and somehow the greater number give one the impression of things created out of wrecks of junks. The little streets, or rather alleys, are full of boats and skeletons of boats and boat timbers; and everywhere, suspended from bamboo poles much taller than the houses, immense bright brown fishing-nets are drying in the sun. The whole curve of the beach is also lined with boats, lying side by side, so that I wonder how it will be possible to get to the water's edge without climbing over them. There is no hotel; but I find hospitality in a fisherman's dwelling, while my kurumaya goes somewhere to hire a boat for Kaka-ura.

In less than ten minutes there is a crowd of several hundred people about the house, half-clad adults and perfectly naked boys. They blockade the building; they obscure the light by filling up the doorways and climbing into the windows to look at the foreigner. The aged proprietor of the cottage protests in vain, says harsh things; the crowd only thickens. Then all the sliding

screens are closed. But in the paper panes there are holes; and at all the lower holes the curious take regular turns at peeping. At a higher hole I do some peeping myself. The crowd is not prepossessing: it is squalid, dull-featured, remarkably ugly. But it is gentle and silent; and there are one or two pretty faces in it which seem extraordinary by reason of the general homeliness of the rest.

At last my kurumaya has succeeded in making arrangements for a boat; and I effect a sortie to the beach, followed by the kurumaya and by all my besiegers. Boats have been moved to make a passage for us, and we embark without trouble of any sort. Our crew consists of two scullers,—an old man at the stern, wearing only a *rokushaku* about his loins, and an old woman at the bow, fully robed and wearing an immense straw hat shaped like a mushroom. Both of course stand to their work and it would be hard to say which is the stronger or more skilful sculler. We passengers squat Oriental fashion upon a mat in the centre of the boat, where a *hibachi*, well stocked with glowing charcoal, invites us to smoke.

III.

The day is clear blue to the end of the world, with a faint wind from the east, barely enough to wrinkle the sea, certainly more than enough to "move three hairs." Nevertheless the boatwoman and the boatman do not seem anxious; and I begin to wonder whether the famous prohibition is not a myth. So delightful the transparent water looks, that before we have left the bay I have to

yield to its temptation by plunging in and swimming after the boat. When I climb back on board we are rounding the promontory on the right; and the little vessel begins to rock. Even under this thin wind the sea is moving in long swells. And as we pass into the open, following the westward trend of the land, we find ourselves gliding over an ink-black depth, in front of one of the very grimmest coasts I ever saw.

A tremendous line of dark iron-coloured cliffs, towering sheer from the sea without a beach, and with never a speck of green below their summits; and here and there along this terrible front, monstrous beetlings, breaches, fissures, earthquake rendings, and topplings-down. Enormous fractures show lines of strata pitched up skyward, or plunging down into the ocean with the long fall of cubic miles of cliff. Before fantastic gaps, prodigious masses of rock, of all nightmarish shapes, rise from profundities unfathomed. And though the wind to-day seems trying to hold its breath, white breakers are reaching far up the cliffs, and dashing their foam into the faces of the splintered crags. We are too far to hear the thunder of them; but their ominous sheet-lightning fully explains to me the story of the three hairs. Along this goblin coast on a wild day there would be no possible chance for the strongest swimmer or the stoutest boat; there is no place for the foot, no hold for the hand, nothing but the sea raving against a precipice of iron. Even to-day, under the feeblest breath imaginable, great swells deluge us with spray as they splash past. And for two long hours this jagged frowning coast towers by; and, as we toil on, rocks rise around us like black teeth; and always, far

away, the foam-bursts gleam at the feet of the implacable cliffs. But there are no sounds save the lapping and plashing of passing swells, and the monotonous creaking of the sculls upon their pegs of wood.

At last, at last, a bay,—a beautiful large bay, with a demilune of soft green hills about it, overtopped by far blue mountains,—and in the very farthest point of the bay a miniature village, in front of which many junks are riding at anchor: Kaka-ura.

But we do not go to Kaka-ura yet; the Kukedo are not there. We cross the broad opening of the bay, journey along another half mile of ghastly sea-precipice, and finally make for a lofty promontory of naked Plutonic rock. We pass by its menacing foot, slip along its side, and lo! at an angle opens the arched mouth of a wonderful cavern, broad, lofty, and full of light, with no floor but the sea. Beneath us, as we slip into it, I can see rocks fully twenty feet down. The water is clear as air. This is the Shin-Kukedo, called the *New* Cavern, though assuredly older than human record by a hundred thousand years.

IV.

A more beautiful sea-cave could scarcely be imagined. The sea, tunnelling the tall promontory through and through, has also, like a great architect, ribbed and groined and polished its mighty work. The arch of the entrance is certainly twenty feet above the deep water, and fifteen wide; and trillions of wave tongues have licked the vault and walls into wondrous smoothness. As we proceed, the rock-roof steadily heightens and the

way widens. Then we unexpectedly glide under a heavy shower of fresh water, dripping from overhead. This spring is called the ō-chōzubachi or mitarashi* of Shin-Kukedo-San. From the high vault at this point it is believed that a great stone will detach itself and fall upon any evil-hearted person who should attempt to enter the cave. I safely pass through the ordeal!

Suddenly as we advance the boatwoman takes a stone from the bottom of the boat, and with it begins to rap heavily on the bow; and the hollow echoing is reiterated with thundering repercussions through all the cave. And in another instant we pass into a great burst of light, coming from the mouth of a magnificent and lofty archway on the left, opening into the cavern at right angles. This explains the singular illumination of the long vault, which at first seemed to come from beneath; for while the opening was still invisible all the water appeared to be suffused with light. Through this grand arch, between outlying rocks, a strip of beautiful green undulating coast appears, over miles of azure water. We glide on toward the third entrance to the Kukedo, opposite to that by which we came in; and enter the dwelling-place of the Kami and the Hotoke, for this grotto is sacred both to Shintō and to Buddhist faith. Here the Kukedo reaches its greatest altitude

* Such are the names given to the water-vessels or cisterns at which Shintō worshippers must wash their hands and rinse their mouths ere praying to the Kami. A mitarashi or ō-chōzubachi is placed before every Shintō temple. The pilgrim to Shin-Kukedo-San should perform this ceremonial ablution at the little rock-spring above described, before entering the sacred cave. Here even the gods of the cave are said to wash after having passed through the seawater.

and breadth. Its vault is fully forty feet above the water, and its walls thirty feet apart. Far up on the right, near the roof, is a projecting white rock, and above the rock an orifice wherefrom a slow stream drips, seeming white as the rock itself.

This is the legendary Fountain of Jizō, the fountain of milk at which the souls of dead children drink. Sometimes it flows more swiftly, sometimes more slowly; but it never ceases by night or day. And mothers suffering from want of milk come hither to pray that milk may be given unto them; and their prayer is heard. And mothers having more milk than their infants need come hither also, and pray to Jizō that so much as they can give may be taken for the dead children; and their prayer is heard, and their milk diminishes.

At least thus the peasants of Izumo say.

And the echoing of the swells leaping against the rocks without, the rushing and rippling of the tide against the walls, the heavy rain of percolating water, sounds of lapping and gurgling and plashing, and sounds of mysterious origin coming from no visible where, make it difficult for us to hear each other speak. The cavern seems full of voices, as if a host of invisible beings were holding tumultuous converse.

Below us all the deeply lying rocks are naked to view as if seen through glass. It seems to me that nothing could be more delightful than to swim through this cave and let oneself drift with the sea-currents through all its cool shadows. But as I am on the point of jumping in, all the other occupants of the boat utter wild cries of protest. It is certain death! men who

jumped in here only six months ago were never heard of again! this is sacred water, Kami-no-umi! And as if to conjure away my temptation, the boatwoman again seizes her little stone and raps fearfully upon the bow. On finding, however, that I am not sufficiently deterred by these stories of sudden death and disappearance, she suddenly screams into my ear the magical word,

“SAME!”

Sharks! I have no longer any desire whatever to swim through the many-sounding halls of Shin-Kukedo-San. I have lived in the tropics!

And we start forthwith for Kyū-Kukedo-San, the Ancient Cavern.

V.

For the ghastly fancies about the Kami-no-umi, the word “same” afforded a satisfactory explanation. But why that long, loud, weird rapping on the bow with a stone evidently kept on board for no other purpose? There was an exaggerated earnestness about the action which gave me an uncanny sensation,—something like that which moves a man while walking at night upon a lonesome road, full of queer shadows, to sing at the top of his voice. The boatwoman at first declares that the rapping was made only for the sake of the singular echo. But after some cautious further questioning, I discover a much more sinister reason for the performance. Moreover, I learn that all the seamen and sea-women of this coast do the same thing when passing through perilous places, or places believed to be haunted by the Ma. What are the Ma?

Goblins!

VI.

From the caves of the Kami we retrace our course for about a quarter of a mile; then make directly for an immense perpendicular wrinkle in the long line of black cliffs. Immediately before it a huge dark rock towers from the sea, whipped by the foam of breaking swells. Rounding it, we glide behind it into still water and shadow, the shadow of a monstrous cleft in the precipice of the coast. And suddenly, at an unsuspected angle, the mouth of another cavern yawns before us; and in another moment our boat touches its threshold of stone with a little shock that sends a long sonorous echo, like the sound of a temple drum, booming through all the abysmal place. A single glance tells me whither we have come. Far within the dusk I see the face of a Jizō, smiling in pale stone, and before him, and all about him, a weird congregation of grey shapes without shape,—a host of fantasticalities that strangely suggest the wreck of a cemetery. From the sea the ribbed floor of the cavern slopes high through deepening shadows back to the black mouth of a farther grotto; and all that slope is covered with hundreds and thousands of forms like shattered haka. But as the eyes grow accustomed to the gloaming it becomes manifest that these were never haka; they are only little towers of stone and pebbles deftly piled up by long and patient labour.

“*Shinda kodomo no shigoto*,” my kurumaya murmurs with a compassionate smile; “all this is the work of the dead children.”

And we disembark. By counsel, I take off my shoes

and put on a pair of zori, or straw sandals provided for me, as the rock is extremely slippery. The others land barefoot. But how to proceed soon becomes a puzzle: the countless stone-piles stand so close together that no space for the foot seems to be left between them.

“Mada michi ga arimasū!” the boatwoman announces, leading the way. There is a path.

Following after her, we squeeze ourselves between the wall of the cavern on the right and some large rocks, and discover a very, very narrow passage left open between the stone-towers. But we are warned to be careful for the sake of the little ghosts: if any of their work be overturned, they will cry. So we move very cautiously and slowly across the cave to a space bare of stone-heaps, where the rocky floor is covered with a thin layer of sand, detritus of a crumbling ledge above it. And in that sand I see light prints of little feet, children's feet, tiny naked feet, only three or four inches long,—*the footprints of the infant ghosts*.

Had we come earlier, the boatwoman says, we should have seen many more. For 'tis at night, when the soil of the cavern is moist with dews and drippings from the roof, that They leave Their footprints upon it; but when the heat of the day comes, and the sand and the rocks dry up, the prints of the little feet vanish away.

There are only three footprints visible, but these are singularly distinct. One points toward the wall of the cavern; the others toward the sea. Here and there, upon ledges or projections of the rock, all about the cavern, tiny straw sandals—children's zori—are lying: offerings of pilgrims to the little ones, that their feet may

not be wounded by the stones. But all the ghostly footprints are prints of naked feet.

Then we advance, picking our way very, very carefully between the stone-towers, toward the mouth of the inner grotto, and reach the statue of Jizō before it. A seated Jizō, carven in granite, holding in one hand the mystic jewel by virtue of which all wishes may be fulfilled; in the other his shakujō, or pilgrim's staff. Before him (strange condescension of Shintō faith!) a little torii has been erected, and a pair of gohei! Evidently this gentle divinity has no enemies; at the feet of the lover of children's ghosts, both creeds unite in tender homage.

I said feet. But this subterranean Jizō has only one foot. The carven lotus on which he reposes has been fractured and broken: two great petals are missing; and the right foot, which must have rested upon one of them, has been knocked off at the ankle. This, I learn upon inquiry, has been done by the waves. In times of great storm the billows rush into the cavern like raging Oni, and sweep all the little stone towers into shingle as they come, and dash the statues against the rocks. But always during the first still night after the tempest the work is reconstructed as before!

“Hotoke ga shimpai shite : naki-naki tsumi naoshi-masū.” They make mourning, the hotoke; weeping, they pile up the stones again, they rebuild their towers of prayer.

All about the black mouth of the inner grotto the bone-coloured rock bears some resemblance to a vast pair of yawning jaws. Downward from this sinister portal the cavern-floor slopes into a deeper and darker

aperture. And within it, as one's eyes become accustomed to the gloom, a still larger vision of stone towers is disclosed; and beyond them, in a nook of the grotto, three other statues of Jizō smile, each one with a torii before it. Here I have the misfortune to upset first one stone-pile and then another, while trying to proceed. My kurumaya, almost simultaneously, ruins a third. To atone therefor, we must build six new towers, or double the number of those which we have cast down. And while we are thus busied, the boatwoman tells of two fishermen who remained in the cavern through all one night, and heard the humming of the viewless gathering, and sounds of speech, like the speech of children murmuring in multitude.

VII.

Only at night do the shadowy children come to build their little stone-heaps at the feet of Jizō; and it is said that every night the stones are changed. When I ask why they do not work by day, when there is none to see them, I am answered: "O-Hi-San* might see them; *the dead exceedingly fear the Lady-Sun.*"

To the question, "Why do they come from the sea?" I can get no satisfactory answer. But doubtless in the quaint imagination of this people, as also in that of many another, there lingers still the primitive idea of some communication, mysterious and awful, between the world of waters and the world of the dead. It is always over the sea, after the Feast of Souls, that the

* "The August Fire-Lady," or, "the August Sun-Lady," Amaterasu-oho-mi-Kami.

spirits pass murmuring back to their dim realm, in those elfish little ships of straw which are launched for them upon the sixteenth day of the seventh moon. Even when these are launched upon rivers, or when floating lanterns are set adrift upon lakes or canals to light the ghosts upon their way, or when a mother bereaved drops into some running stream one hundred little prints of Jizō for the sake of her lost darling, the vague idea behind the pious act is that all waters flow to the sea and the sea itself unto the “Nether-distant Land.”

Some time, somewhere, this day will come back to me at night, with its visions and sounds: the dusky cavern, and its grey hosts of stone climbing back into darkness, and the faint prints of little naked feet, and the weirdly smiling images, and the broken syllables of the waters, inward-borne, multiplied by husky echoings, blending into one vast ghostly whispering, like the humming of the *Sai-no-Kawara*.

And over the black-blue bay we glide to the rocky beach of *Kaka-ura*.

VIII.

As at *Mitsu-ura*, the water's edge is occupied by a serried line of fishing-boats, each with its nose to the sea; and behind these are ranks of others; and it is only just barely possible to squeeze one's way between them over the beach to the drowsy, pretty, quaint little streets behind them. Everybody seems to be asleep when we first land: the only living creature visible is a

cat, sitting on the stern of a boat; and even that cat, according to Japanese beliefs, might not be a real cat, but an o-baké or a nekomata,—in short, a goblin-cat, *for it has a long tail*. It is hard work to discover the solitary hotel: there are no signs; and every house seems a private house, either a fisherman's or a farmer's. But the little place is worth wandering about in. A kind of yellow stucco is here employed to cover the exterior of walls; and this light warm tint under the bright blue day gives to the miniature streets a more than cheerful aspect.

When we do finally discover the hotel, we have to wait quite a good while before going in; for nothing is ready; everybody is asleep or away, though all the screens and sliding-doors are open. Evidently there are no thieves in Kaka-ura. The hotel is on a little hillock, and is approached from the main street (the rest are only miniature alleys) by two little flights of stone steps. Immediately across the way I see a Zen temple and a Shintō temple, almost side by side.

At last a pretty young woman, naked to the waist, with a bosom like a Naiad, comes running down the street to the hotel at a surprising speed, bowing low with a smile as she hurries by us into the house. This little person is the waiting-maid of the inn, O-Kayo-San, —a name signifying “Years of Bliss.” Presently she reappears at the threshold, fully robed in a nice kimono, and gracefully invites us to enter, which we are only too glad to do. The room is neat and spacious; Shintō kakemono from Kitzuki are suspended in the toko and upon the walls; and in one corner I see a very handsome Zen-butsudan, or household shrine. (The form of

the shrine, as well as the objects of worship therein, vary according to the sect of the worshippers.) Suddenly I become aware that it is growing strangely dark; and looking about me, perceive that all the doors and windows and other apertures of the inn are densely blocked up by a silent, smiling crowd which has gathered to look at me. I could not have believed there were so many people in Kaka-ura.

In a Japanese house, during the hot season, everything is thrown open to the breeze. All the shōji or sliding paper-screens, which serve for windows; and all the opaque paper-screens (*fusuma*) used in other seasons to separate apartments, are removed. There is nothing left between floor and roof save the frame or skeleton of the building; the dwelling is literally *unwalled*, and may be seen through in any direction. The landlord, finding the crowd embarrassing, closes up the building in front. The silent, smiling crowd goes to the rear. The rear is also closed. Then the crowd masses to right and left of the house; and both sides have to be closed, which makes it insufferably hot. And the crowd make gentle protest.

Wherefore our host, being displeased, rebukes the multitude with argument and reason, yet without lifting his voice. (Never do these people lift up their voices in anger.) And what he says I strive to translate, with emphasis, as follows:—

“You-as-for! outrageousness doing,—*what* marvellous is?

“*Theatre* is not!

“*Juggler* is not!

“*Wrestler* is not!

“What amusing is?

“Honourable-Guest this is!

“Now august-to-eat-time-is; to-look-at evil matter is.
Honourable-returning-time-in-to-look-at-as-for-is-good.”

But outside, soft laughing voices continue to plead; pleading, shrewdly enough, only with the feminine portion of the family: the landlord's heart is less easily touched. And these, too, have their arguments:—

“Oba-San!

“O-Kayo-San!

“Shōji-to-open-condescend!—want to see!

“Though-we-look-at, Thing-that-by-looking-at-is-worn-out-it-is-not!

“So that not-to-hinder looking-at is good.

“Hasten therefore to open!”

As for myself, I would gladly protest against this sealing-up, for there is nothing offensive nor even embarrassing in the gaze of these innocent, gentle people; but as the landlord seems to be personally annoyed, I do not like to interfere. The crowd, however, does not go away: it continues to increase, waiting for my exit. And there is one high window in the rear, of which the paper-panes contain some holes; and I see shadows of little people climbing up to get to the holes. Presently there is an eye at every hole.

When I approach the window, the peepers drop noiselessly to the ground, with little timid bursts of laughter, and run away. But they soon come back again. A more charming crowd could hardly be imagined: nearly all boys and girls, half-naked because of the heat, but fresh and clean as flower-buds. Many of the faces are surprisingly pretty; there are but very few which are

not extremely pleasing. But where are the men, and the old women? Truly, this population seems not of Kaka-ura, but rather of the Sai-no-Kawara. The boys look like little Jizō.

During dinner, I amuse myself by poking pears and little pieces of radish through the holes in the shōji. At first there is much hesitation and silvery laughter; but in a little while the silhouette of a tiny hand reaches up cautiously, and a pear vanishes away. Then a second pear is taken, without snatching, as softly as if a ghost had appropriated it. Thereafter hesitation ceases, despite the effort of one elderly woman to create a panic by crying out the word *Mahōtsukai*, "wizard." By the time the dinner is over and the shōji removed, we have all become good friends. Then the crowd resumes its silent observation from the four cardinal points.

I never saw a more striking difference in the appearance of two village populations than that between the youth of Mitsu-ura and of Kaka. Yet the villages are but two hours' sailing distance apart. In remoter Japan, as in certain islands of the West Indies, particular physical types are developed apparently among communities but slightly isolated; on one side of a mountain a population may be remarkably attractive, while upon the other you may find a hamlet whose inhabitants are decidedly unprepossessing. But nowhere in this country have I seen a prettier *jeunesse* than that of Kaka-ura.

"*Returning-time-in-to-look-at-as-for-is-good.*" As we descend to the bay, the whole of Kaka-ura, including even the long-invisible ancients of the village, accompanies us; making no sound except the pattering of

geta. Thus we are escorted to our boat. Into all the other craft drawn up on the beach the younger folk clamber lightly, and seat themselves on the prows and the gunwales to gaze at the marvellous *Thing-that-by-looking-at-worn-out-is-not*. And all smile, but say nothing, even to each other: somehow the experience gives me the sensation of being asleep; it is so soft, so gentle, and so queer withal, just like things seen in dreams. And as we glide away over the blue lucent water I look back to see the people all waiting and gazing still from the great semicircle of boats; all the slender brown child-limbs dangling from the prows; all the velvety-black heads motionless in the sun; all the boy-faces smiling Jizō-smiles; all the black soft eyes still watching, tirelessly watching, the *Thing-that-by-looking-at-worn-out-is-not*. And as the scene, too swiftly receding, diminishes to the width of a kakemono, I vainly wish that I could buy this last vision of it, to place it in my toko, and delight my soul betimes with gazing thereon. Yet another moment, and we round a rocky point; and Kaka-ura vanishes from my sight forever. So all things pass away.

Assuredly those impressions which longest haunt recollection are the most transitory: we remember many more instants than minutes, more minutes than hours; and who remembers an entire day? The sum of the remembered happiness of a lifetime is the creation of seconds. What is more fugitive than a smile? yet when does the memory of a vanished smile expire? or the soft regret which that memory may evoke?

Regret for a single individual smile is something common to normal human nature; but regret for the

smile of a population, for a smile considered as an abstract quality, is certainly a rare sensation, and one to be obtained, I fancy, only in this Orient land whose people smile forever like their own gods of stone. And this precious experience is already mine; I am regretting the smile of Kaka.

Simultaneously there comes the recollection of a strangely grim Buddhist legend. Once the Buddha smiled; and by the wondrous radiance of that smile were countless worlds illuminated. But there came a Voice, saying: "*It is not real! It cannot last!*" And the light passed.

V.

THE HOUSEHOLD SHRINE.

I.

IN Japan there are two forms of the Religion of the Dead,—that which belongs to Shintō, and that which belongs to Buddhism. The first is the primitive cult, commonly called ancestor-worship. But the term ancestor-worship seems to me much too confined for the religion which pays reverence not only to those ancient gods believed to be the fathers of the Japanese race, but likewise to a host of deified sovereigns, heroes, princes, and illustrious men. Within comparatively recent times, the great Daimyō of Izumo, for example, were apotheosised; and the peasants of Shimane still pray before the shrines of the Matsudaira. Moreover Shintō, like the faiths of Hellas and of Rome, has its deities of the elements and special deities who preside over all the various affairs of life. Therefore ancestor-worship, though still a striking feature of Shintō, does not alone constitute the State Religion: neither does the term fully describe the Shintō cult of the dead,—a cult which in Izumo retains its primitive character more than in other parts of Japan.

And here I may presume, though no sinologue, to say something about that State Religion of Japan,—that

ancient faith of Izumo,—which, although even more deeply rooted in national life than Buddhism, is far less known to the Western world. Except in special works by such men of erudition as Chamberlain and Satow,—works with which the Occidental reader, unless himself a specialist, is not likely to become familiar outside of Japan,—little has been written in English about Shintō which gives the least idea of what Shintō is. Of its ancient traditions and rites much of rarest interest may be learned from the works of the philologists just mentioned; but, as Mr. Satow himself acknowledges, a definite answer to the question, “What is the nature of Shintō?” is still difficult to give. How define the common element in the six kinds of Shintō which are known to exist, and some of which no foreign scholar has yet been able to examine for lack of time or of authorities or of opportunity? Even in its modern external forms, Shintō is sufficiently complex to task the united powers of the historian, philologist, and anthropologist, merely to trace out the multitudinous lines of its evolution, and to determine the sources of its various elements: primeval polytheisms and fetichisms, traditions of dubious origin, philosophical concepts from China, Korea, and elsewhere,—all mingled with Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. The so-called “Revival of Pure Shintō”—an effort, aided by Government, to restore the cult to its archaic simplicity, by divesting it of foreign characteristics, and especially of every sign or token of Buddhist origin—resulted only, so far as the avowed purpose was concerned, in the destruction of priceless art, and in leaving the enigma of origins as complicated as before. Shintō had been too profoundly modified in

exerting his utmost strength in the fight can scarcely hope to conquer, yet must he die rather than desert a prince who, trusting in him, has entered into his house.' Having thus spoken, he again took his weapons, and went in once more to fight. Then, their strength being exhausted, and their arrows finished, he said to the Prince: 'My hands are wounded, and our arrows are finished. We cannot now fight: what shall be done?' The Prince replied saying: 'There is nothing more to do. Do thou now slay me.' So the Grandee Tsubura thrust the Prince to death with his sword, and forthwith killed himself by cutting off his own head."

Thousands of equally strong examples could easily be quoted from later Japanese history, including many which occurred even within the memory of the living. Nor was it for persons alone that to die might become a sacred duty: in certain contingencies conscience held it scarcely less a duty to die for a purely personal conviction; and he who held any opinion which he believed of paramount importance would, when other means failed, write his views in a letter of farewell, and then take his own life, in order to call attention to his beliefs and to prove their sincerity. Such an instance occurred only last year in Tōkyō,* when the young lieutenant of militia, Ōhara Takeyoshi, killed himself by *harakiri* in the cemetery of Saitokuji, leaving a letter stating as the reason for his act, his hope to force public recognition of the danger to Japanese independence from the growth of Russian power in the North Pacific. But a much more touching sacrifice, in May of the same year,—a

* This was written early in 1892.

sacrifice conceived in the purest and most innocent spirit of loyalty,—was that of the young girl Yoko Hatakeyama, who, after the attempt to assassinate the Czarevitch, travelled from Tōkyō to Kyōto and there killed herself before the gate of the Kenchō, merely as a vicarious atonement for the incident which had caused shame to Japan and grief to the Father of the people,—His Sacred Majesty the Emperor.

III.

As to its exterior forms, modern Shintō is indeed difficult to analyse; but through all the intricate texture of extraneous beliefs so thickly interwoven about it, indications of its earliest character are still easily discerned. In certain of its primitive rites, in its archaic prayers and texts and symbols, in the history of its shrines, and even in many of the artless ideas of its poorest worshippers, it is plainly revealed as the most ancient of all forms of worship,—that which Herbert Spencer terms “the root of all religions,”—devotion to the dead. Indeed, it has been frequently so expounded by its own greatest scholars and theologians. Its divinities are ghosts; *all* the dead become deities. In the Tama-no-mihashira the great commentator Hirata says “the spirits of the dead continue to exist in the unseen world which is everywhere about us, and they all become gods of varying character and degrees of influence. Some reside in temples built in their honour; others hover near their tombs; and they continue to render services to their prince, parents, wife, and children, as when in

the body.”* And they do more than this, for they control the lives and the doings of men. “Every human action,” says Hirata, “is the work of a god.”** And Motowori, scarcely less famous an exponent of pure Shintō doctrine, writes: “All the moral ideas which a man requires are implanted in his bosom by the gods, and are of the same nature with those instincts which impel him to eat when he is hungry or to drink when he is thirsty.”*** With this doctrine of Intuition no decalogue is required, no fixed code of ethics; and the human conscience is declared to be the only necessary guide. Though every action be “the work of a Kami,” yet each man has within him the power to discern the righteous impulse from the unrighteous, the influence of the good deity from that of the evil. No moral teacher is so infallible as one’s own heart. “To have learned that there is no way (*michi*),”§ says Motowori, “to be learned and practiced, is really to have learned the Way of the Gods.”||| And Hirata writes: “If you desire to practice true virtue, learn to stand in awe of the Un-

* Quoted from Mr. Satow’s masterly essay, “The Revival of Pure Shintō,” published in the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*. By “gods” are not necessarily meant beneficent *Kami*. Shintō has no devils; but it has its “bad gods” as well as good deities.

** Satow, “The Revival of Pure Shintō.”

*** *Ibid.*

§ In the sense of *Moral Path*,—*i. e.* an ethical system.

||| Satow, “The Revival of Pure Shintō.” The whole force of Motowori’s words will not be fully understood unless the reader knows that the term “Shintō” is of comparatively modern origin in Japan,—having been borrowed from the Chinese to distinguish the ancient faith from Buddhism; and that the old name for the primitive religion is *Kami-no-michi*, “the Way of the Gods.”

seen; and that will prevent you from doing wrong. Make a vow to the Gods who rule over the Unseen, and cultivate the conscience (*ma-gokoro*) implanted in you; and then you will never wander from the way." How this spiritual self-culture may best be obtained, the same great expounder has stated with almost equal brevity: "Devotion to the memory of ancestors is the mainspring of all virtues. No one who discharges his duty to them will ever be disrespectful to the Gods or to his living parents. Such a man will be faithful to his prince, loyal to his friends, and kind and gentle with his wife and children."*

How far are these antique beliefs removed from the ideas of the nineteenth century? Certainly not so far that we can afford to smile at them. The faith of the primitive man and the knowledge of the most profound psychologist may meet in strange harmony upon the threshold of the same ultimate truth, and the thought of a child may repeat the conclusions of a Spencer or a Schopenhauer. Are not our ancestors in very truth our *Kami*? Is not every action indeed the work of the Dead who dwell within us? Have not our impulses and tendencies, our capacities and weaknesses, our heroisms and timidities, been created by those vanished myriads from whom we received the all-mysterious bequest of Life? Do we still think of that infinitely complex Something which is each one of us, and which we call EGO, as "I" or as "They?" What is our pride or shame but the pride or shame of the Unseen in that which They have made?—and what our Conscience but the inherited

* Satow, "The Revival of Pure Shintō."

sum of countless dead experiences with varying good and evil? Nor can we hastily reject the Shintō thought that all the dead become gods, while we respect the convictions of those strong souls of to-day who proclaim the divinity of man.

IV.

Shintō ancestor-worship, no doubt, like all ancestor-worship, was developed out of funeral rites, according to that general law of religious evolution traced so fully by Herbert Spencer. And there is reason to believe that the early forms of Shintō public worship may have been evolved out of a yet older family worship,—much after the manner in which M. Fustel de Coulanges, in his wonderful book, "La Cité Antique," has shown the religious public institutions among the Greeks and Romans to have been developed from the religion of the hearth. Indeed, the word *ujigami*, now used to signify a Shintō parish temple, and also its deity, means "*family God*," and in its present form is a corruption or contraction of *uchi-no-Kami*, meaning the "*god of the interior*" or "*the god of the house*." Shintō expounders have, it is true, attempted to interpret the term otherwise; and Hirata, as quoted by Mr. Ernest Satow, declared the name should be applied only to the *common ancestor*, or *ancestors*, or to one so entitled to the gratitude of a community as to merit equal honours. Such, undoubtedly, was the just use of the term in his time, and long before it; but the etymology of the word would certainly seem to indicate its origin in family worship, and to con-

firm modern scientific beliefs in regard to the evolution of religious institutions.

Now just as among the Greeks and Latins the family cult always continued to exist through all the development and expansion of the public religion, so the Shintō family worship has continued concomitantly with the communal worship at the countless *ujigami*, with popular worship at the famed *Oho-ya-shiro* of various provinces or districts, and with national worship at the great shrines of *Ise* and *Kitzuki*. Many objects connected with the family cult are certainly of alien or modern origin; but its simple rites and its unconscious poetry retain their archaic charm. And, to the student of Japanese life, by far the most interesting aspect of Shintō is offered in this home worship, which, like the home worship of the antique Occident, exists in a dual form.

V.

In nearly all Izumo dwellings there is a *kamidana*,* or "Shelf of the Gods." On this is usually placed a small Shintō shrine (*miya*) containing tablets bearing the names of gods (one at least of which tablets is furnished by the neighbouring Shintō parish temple), and various *ofuda*, holy texts or charms, which most often are written promises in the name of some *Kami* to protect his worshipper. If there be no *miya*, the tablets or *ofuda* are simply placed upon the shelf in a certain order, the

* From *Kami*, "the [Powers] Above," or the Gods, and *tana*, "a shelf." The initial "t" of the latter word changes into "d" in the compound,—just as that of *tokkuri*, "a jar" or "bottle," becomes *dokkuri* in the compound *o-mikidokkuri*.

most sacred having the middle place. Very rarely are images to be seen upon a kamidana: for primitive Shintōism excluded images rigidly as Jewish or Mohammedan law; and all Shintō iconography belongs to a comparatively modern era,—especially to the period of Ryōbu-Shintō,—and must be considered of Buddhist origin. If there be any images, they will probably be such as have been made only within recent years at Kitzuki: those small twin figures of Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami and of Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, described in a former paper upon the Kitzuki-no-oho-yashiro. Shintō kakemono, which are also of latter-day origin, representing incidents from the Kojiki, are much more common than Shintō icons: these usually occupy the toko, or alcove, in the same room in which the kamidana is placed; but they will not be seen in the houses of the more cultivated classes. Ordinarily there will be found upon the kamidana nothing but the simple miya containing some ofuda: very, very seldom will a mirror* be seen, or gohei,—except the gohei attached to the small shimenawa either hung just above the kamidana or suspended to the box-like frame in which the miya sometimes is placed. The shimenawa and the paper gohei are the true emblems of Shintō: even the ofuda and the

* The mirror, as an emblem of female divinities, is kept in the secret innermost shrine of various Shintō temples. But the mirror of metal commonly placed before the public gaze in a Shintō shrine is not really of Shintō origin, but was introduced into Japan as a Buddhist symbol of the Shingon sect. As the mirror is the symbol in Shintō of female divinities, the sword is the emblem of male deities. The real symbols of the god or goddess are not, however, exposed to human gaze under any circumstances.

mamori are quite modern. Not only before the household shrine, but also above the house-door of almost every home in Izumo, the shimenawa is suspended. It is ordinarily a thin rope of rice straw; but before the dwellings of high Shintō officials, such as the Taisha-Guji of Kitzuki, its size and weight are enormous. One of the first curious facts that the traveller in Izumo cannot fail to be impressed by is the universal presence of this symbolic rope of straw, which may sometimes even be seen round a rice-field. But the grand displays of the sacred symbol are upon the great festivals of the new year, the accession of Jimmu Tennō to the throne of Japan, and the Emperor's birthday. Then all the miles of streets are festooned with shimenawa thick as ship-cables.

VI.

A particular feature of Matsue are the miya-shops,—establishments not, indeed, peculiar to the old Izumo town, but much more interesting than those to be found in larger cities of other provinces. There are miya of a hundred varieties and sizes, from the child's toy miya which sells for less than one sen, to the large shrine destined for some rich home, and costing perhaps ten yen or more. Besides these, the household shrines of Shintō, may occasionally be seen massive shrines of precious wood, lacquered and gilded, worth from three hundred even to fifteen hundred yen. These are not household shrines; but festival shrines, and are made only for rich merchants. They are displayed on Shintō holidays, and twice a year are borne through the streets

in procession, to shouts of "*Chosaya! chosaya!*"* Each temple parish also possesses a large portable miya which is paraded on these occasions with much chanting and beating of drums. The majority of household miya are cheap constructions. A very fine one can be purchased for about two yen; but those little shrines one sees in the houses of the common people cost, as a rule, considerably less than half a yen. And elaborate or costly household shrines are contrary to the spirit of pure Shintō. The true miya should be made of spotless white hinoki** wood, and be put together without nails. Most of those I have seen in the shops had their several parts joined only with rice-paste; but the skill of the maker rendered this sufficient. Pure Shintō requires that a miya should be without gilding or ornamentation. The beautiful miniature temples in some rich homes may justly excite admiration by their artistic structure and decoration; but the ten or thirteen cent miya, in the house of a labourer or a kurumaya, of plain white wood,

* Anciently the two great Shintō festivals on which the miya were thus carried in procession were the Yoshigami-no-matsuri, or festival of the God of the New Year, and the anniversary of Jimmu Tennō to the throne. The second of these is still observed. The celebration of the Emperor's birthday is the only other occasion when the miya are paraded. On both days the streets are beautifully decorated with lanterns and shimenawa, the fringed ropes of rice straw which are the emblems of Shintō. Nobody now knows exactly what the words chanted on these days (*chosaya! chosaya!*) mean. One theory is that they are a corruption of Sagicho, the name of a great samurai military festival, which was celebrated nearly at the same time as the Yoshigami-no-matsuri,—both holidays now being obsolete.

** *Thuya obtusa*.

truly represents that spirit of simplicity characterising the primitive religion.

VII.

The kamidana or "God-shelf," upon which are placed the miya and other sacred objects of Shintō worship, is usually fastened at a height of about six or seven feet above the floor. As a rule it should not be placed higher than the hand can reach with ease; but in houses having lofty rooms the miya is sometimes put up at such a height that the sacred offerings cannot be made without the aid of a box or other object to stand upon. It is not commonly a part of the house structure, but a plain shelf attached with brackets either to the wall itself, at some angle of the apartment, or, as is much more usual, to the kamoi, or horizontal grooved beam, in which the screens of opaque paper (*fusuma*), which divide room from room, slide to and fro. Occasionally it is painted or lacquered. But the ordinary kamidana is of white wood, and is made larger or smaller in proportion to the size of the miya, or the number of the *ofuda* and other sacred objects to be placed upon it. In some houses, notably those of innkeepers and small merchants, the kamidana is made long enough to support a number of small shrines dedicated to different Shintō deities, particularly those believed to preside over wealth and commercial prosperity. In the houses of the poor it is nearly always placed in the room facing the street; and Matsue shopkeepers usually erect it in their shops,—so that the passer-by or the customer can tell at a glance in what deities the occupant puts his trust. There are many

regulations concerning it. It may be placed to face south or east, but should not face west, and under no possible circumstances should it be suffered to face north or northwest. One explanation of this is the influence upon Shintō of Chinese philosophy, according to which there is some fancied relation between South or East and the Male Principle, and between West or North and the Female Principle. But the popular notion on the subject is that because a dead person is buried with the head turned north, it would be very wrong to place a miya so as to face north,—since everything relating to death is impure; and the regulation about the west is not strictly observed. Most kamidana in Izumo, however, face south or east. In the houses of the poorest—often consisting of but one apartment—there can be little choice as to rooms; but it is a rule, observed in the dwellings of the middle classes, that the kamidana must not be placed either in the guest room (*zashiki*) nor in the kitchen; and in shizoku houses its place is usually in one of the smaller family apartments. Respect must be shown it. One must not sleep, for example, or even lie down to rest, with his feet turned towards it. One must not pray before it, or even stand before it, while in a state of religious impurity,—such as that entailed by having touched a corpse, or attended a Buddhist funeral, or even during the period of mourning for kindred buried according to the Buddhist rite. Should any member of the family be thus buried, then during fifty days* the kamidana must be entirely screened from

* Such at least is the mourning period under such circumstances in certain samurai families. Others say twenty days is suf-

view with pure white paper, and even the Shintō ofuda, or pious invocations fastened upon the house-door, must have white paper pasted over them. During the same mourning period the fire in the house is considered unclean; and at the close of the term all the ashes of the braziers and of the kitchen must be cast away, and new fire kindled with a flint and steel. Nor are funerals the only source of legal uncleanness. Shintō, as the religion of purity and purification, has a Deuteronomy of quite an extensive kind. During certain periods women must not even pray before the miya, much less make offerings or touch the sacred vessels, or kindle the lights of the Kami.

VIII.

Before the miya, or whatever holy object of Shintō worship be placed upon the kamidana, are set two quaintly shaped jars for the offerings of saké; two small vases, to contain sprays of the sacred plant sakaki, or offerings of flowers; and a small lamp, shaped like a tiny saucer, where a wick of rush-pith floats in rapeseed oil. Strictly speaking, all these utensils except the flower-vases should be made of unglazed red earthenware, such as we find described in the early chapters of the Kojiki: and still at Shintō festivals in Izumo, when saké is drunk in honour of the gods, it is drunk out of cups of red baked unglazed clay shaped like shallow round dishes. But of late years it has become the fashion to make all

ficient. The Buddhist code of mourning is extremely varied and complicated, and would require much space to dilate upon.

the utensils of a fine kamidana of brass or bronze,—even the *hanaiké*, or flower-vases. Among the poor, the most archaic utensils are still used to a great extent, especially in the remoter country districts; the lamp being a simple saucer or *kawaraké* of red clay; and the flower-vases most often bamboo cups, made by simply cutting a section of bamboo immediately below a joint and about five inches above it.

The brazen lamp is a much more complicated object than the *kawaraké*, which costs but one *rin*. The brass lamp costs about twenty-five *sen*, at least. It consists of two parts. The lower part, shaped like a very shallow, broad wineglass, with a very thick stem, has an interior as well as an exterior rim; and the bottom of a correspondingly broad and shallow brass cup, which is the upper part and contains the oil, fits exactly into this inner rim. This kind of lamp is always furnished with a small brass object in the shape of a flat ring, with a stem set at right angles to the surface of the ring. It is used for moving the floating wick and keeping it at any position required; and the little perpendicular stem is long enough to prevent the fingers from touching the oil.

The most curious objects to be seen on any ordinary kamidana are the stoppers of the *saké*-vessels or *o-mikidokkuri* ("honourable *saké*-jars"). These stoppers—*o-mikidokkuri-no-kuchisashi*—may be made of brass, or of fine thin slips of wood jointed and bent into the singular form required. Properly speaking, the thing is not a real stopper, in spite of its name; its lower part does not fill the mouth of the jar at all: it simply hangs in the orifice like a leaf put there stem downwards. I find it difficult to learn its history; but, though there are

many designs of it,—the finer ones being of brass,—the shape of all seems to hint at a Buddhist origin. Possibly the shape was borrowed from a Buddhist symbol,—the Hoshi-no-tama, that mystic gem whose lambent glow (iconographically suggested as a playing of flame) is the emblem of Pure Essence; and thus the object would be typical at once of the purity of the wine-offering and the purity of the heart of the giver.

The little lamp may not be lighted every evening in all homes, since there are families too poor to afford even this infinitesimal nightly expenditure of oil. But upon the first, fifteenth, and twenty-eighth of each month the light is always kindled; for these are Shintō holidays of obligation, when offerings must be made to the gods, and when all uji-ko, or parishioners of a Shintō temple, are supposed to visit their uji-gami. In every home on these days saké is poured as an offering into the o-mikidokkuri, and in the vases of the kamidana are placed sprays of the holy sakaki, or sprigs of pine, or fresh flowers. On the first day of the new year the kamidana is always decked with sakaki, moromoki (ferns), and pine-sprigs, and also with a shimenawa; and large double rice cakes are placed upon it as offerings to the gods.

IX.

But only the ancient gods of Shintō are worshipped before the kamidana. The family ancestors or family dead are worshipped either in a separate room (called the mitamaya, or “Spirit Chamber”), or, if worshipped according to the Buddhist rites, before the butsuma or butsudan.

The Buddhist family worship coexists in the vast majority of Izumo homes with the Shintō family worship; and whether the dead be honoured in the mitamaya or before the butsudan altogether depends upon the religious traditions of the household. Moreover, there are families in Izumo—particularly in Kitzuki—whose members do not profess Buddhism in any form, and a very few, belonging to the Shinshū or Nichiren-shū,* whose members do not practice Shintō. But the domestic cult of the dead is maintained, whether the family be Shintō or Buddhist. The *ihai* or tablets of the Buddhist family dead (*Hotoke*) are never placed in a special room or shrine, but in the Buddhist household shrine** along with

* In spite of the supposed rigidity of the Nichiren sect in such matters, most followers of its doctrine in Izumo are equally fervent Shintōists. I have not been able to observe whether the same is true of Izumo Shin-shū families as a rule; but I know that some Shin-shū believers in Matsue worship at Shintō shrines. Adoring only that form of Buddha called Amida, the Shin sect might be termed a Buddhist "Unitarianism." It seems never to have been able to secure a strong footing in Izumo on account of its doctrinal hostility to Shintō. Elsewhere throughout Japan it is the most vigorous and prosperous of all Buddhist sects.

** Mr. Morse, in his *Japanese Homes*, published on hearsay a very strange error when he stated: "The Buddhist household shrines rest on the floor—at least so I was informed." They never rest on the floor under any circumstances. In the better class of houses special architectural arrangements are made for the butsudan; an alcove, recess, or other contrivance, often so arranged as to be concealed from view by a sliding panel or a little door. In smaller dwellings it may be put on a shelf, for want of a better place, and in the homes of the poor, on the top of the tansu, or clothes-chest. It is never placed so high as the kamidana, but seldom at a less height than three feet above the floor. In Mr. Morse's own illustration of a Buddhist household shrine (p. 226) it does not rest on the

the images or pictures of Buddhist divinities usually there enclosed,—or, at least, this is always the case when the honours paid them are given according to the Buddhist instead of the Shintō rite. The form of the butsudan or butsuma, the character of its holy images, its ofuda, or its pictures, and even the prayers said before it, differ according to the fifteen different shū, or sects; and a very large volume would have to be written in order to treat the subject of the butsuma exhaustively. Therefore I must content myself with stating that there are Buddhist household shrines of all dimensions, prices, and degrees of magnificence; and that the butsudan of the Shin-shū, although to me the least interesting of all, is popularly considered to be the most beautiful in design and finish. The butsudan of a very poor household may be worth a few cents, but the rich devotee might purchase in Kyōto a shrine worth as many thousands of yen as he could pay.

The ihai of a man is larger than that of a woman, and has a headpiece also, which the tablet of a female has not; while a child's ihai is always very small.* The

floor at all, but on the upper shelf of a cupboard, which must not be confounded with the butsudan—a very small one. The sketch in question seems to have been made during the Festival of the Dead, for the offerings in the picture are those of the Bommatsuri. At that time the household butsudan is always exposed to view, and often moved from its usual place in order to obtain room for the offerings to be set before it. To place any holy object on the floor is considered by the Japanese very disrespectful. As for Shintō objects, to place even a mamori on the floor is deemed a sin.

* Two ihai are always made for each Buddhist dead. One, usually larger than that placed in the family shrine, is kept in the temple of which the deceased was a parishioner, together with a cup

average height of the *ihai* made for a male adult is a little more than a foot, and its thickness about an inch. It has a top, or headpiece, surmounted by the symbol of the *Hoshi-no-tama* or *Mystic Gem*, and ordinarily decorated with a cloud-design of some kind, and the pedestal is a lotus-flower rising out of clouds. As a general rule all this is richly lacquered and gilded; the tablet itself being lacquered in black, and bearing the posthumous name, or *kaimyō*, in letters of gold,—*ken-mu-ji-shō-shin-ji*, or other syllables indicating the supposed virtues of the departed. The poorest people, unable to afford such handsome tablets, have *ihai* made of plain wood; and the *kaimyō* is sometimes simply written on these in black characters; but more commonly it is written upon a strip of white paper, which is then pasted upon the *ihai* with rice-paste. The living name is perhaps inscribed upon the back of the tablet. Such tablets accumulate, of course, with the passing of generations; and in certain homes great numbers are preserved.

A beautiful and touching custom still exists in Izumo, and perhaps throughout Japan, although much less common than it used to be. So far as I can learn, however, it was always confined to the cultivated classes. When a husband dies, two *ihai* are made, in case the wife resolves never to marry again. On one of these the *kaimyō* of the dead man is painted in characters of

in which tea or water is daily poured out as an offering. In almost any large temple, thousands of such *ihai* may be seen, arranged in rows, tier above tier,—each with its cup before it,—for even the souls of the dead are supposed to drink tea. Sometimes, I fear, the offering is forgotten, for I have seen rows of cups containing only dust, the fault, perhaps, of some lazy acolyte.

gold, and on the other that of the living widow; but, in the latter case, the first character of the kaimyō is painted in red, and the other characters in gold. These two tablets are then placed in the household butsuma. Two larger ones, similarly inscribed, are placed in the parish temple; but no cup is set before that of the wife. The solitary crimson ideograph signifies a solemn pledge to remain faithful to the memory of the dead. Furthermore, the wife loses her living name among all her friends and relatives, and is thereafter addressed only by a fragment of her kaimyō,—as, for example, "Shintoku-in-San," an abbreviation of the much longer and more sonorous posthumous name, *Shin-toku-in-den-jōyō-teisō-daishi*.* Thus to be called by one's kaimyō is at once an honour to the memory of the husband and the constancy of the bereaved wife. A precisely similar pledge is taken by a man after the loss of a wife to whom he was passionately attached; and one crimson letter upon his ihai registers the vow not only in the home but also in the place of public worship. But the widower is never called by his kaimyō, as is the widow.

The first religious duty of the morning in a Buddhist household is to set before the tablets of the dead a little cup of tea, made with the first hot water prepared,—*O-Holoke-San-ni-o-cha-to-ageru*.** Daily offer-

* This is a fine example of a samurai kaimyō. The kaimyō of kwazoku or samurai are different from those of humbler dead; and a Japanese, by a single glance at an ihai, can tell at once to what class of society the deceased belonged, by the Buddhist words used.

** Presenting the honourable tea to the august Buddhas,—for by Buddhist faith it is hoped, if not believed, that the dead become Buddhas and escape the sorrows of further transmigration. Thus

ings of boiled rice are also made; and fresh flowers are put in the shrine vases; and incense—although not allowed by Shintō—is burned before the tablets. At night, and also during the day upon certain festivals, both candles and a small oil-lamp are lighted in the butsuma,—a lamp somewhat differently shaped from the lamp of the miya and called rintō. On the day of each month corresponding to the date of death a little repast is served before the tablets, consisting of shōjin-ryōri only, the vegetarian food of the Buddhists. But as Shintō family worship has its special annual festival, which endures from the first to the third day of the new year, so Buddhist ancestor-worship has its yearly Bonku, or Bommatsuri, lasting from the thirteenth to the sixteenth day of the seventh month. This is the Buddhist Feast of Souls. Then the butsuma is decorated to the utmost, special offerings of food and of flowers are made, and all the house is made beautiful to welcome the coming of the ghostly visitors.

Now Shintō, like Buddhism, has its ihai; but these are of the simplest possible shape and material,—mere slips of plain white wood. The average height is only about eight inches. These tablets are either placed in a special miya kept in a different room from that in which the shrine of the Kami is erected, or else simply arranged on a small shelf called by the people *Mitama-San-no-tana*,—"the Shelf of the August Spirits." The shelf or the shrine of the ancestors and household dead is placed always at a considerable height in the mitamaya or soreisha (as the Spirit Chamber is sometimes the expression "is dead" is often rendered in Japanese by the phrase "is become a Buddha."

lamps of the ancestors and the gods are lighted. If several great deities are represented in the miya or upon the kamidana by several ofuda, then a separate lamp is sometimes lighted for each; and if there be a butsuma in the dwelling, its tapers or lamp are lighted at the same time.

Although the use of the flint and steel for lighting the lamps of the gods will probably have become obsolete within another generation, it still prevails largely in Izumo, especially in the country districts. Even where the safety-match has entirely supplanted the orthodox utensils, the orthodox sentiment shows itself in the matter of the choice of matches to be used. Foreign matches are inadmissible: the native matchmaker quite successfully represented that foreign matches contained phosphorus "made from the bones of dead animals," and that to kindle the lights of the Kami with such unholy fire would be sacrilege. In other parts of Japan the matchmakers stamped upon their boxes the words: "*Saikyō go honzon yo*" (Fit for the use of the August High Temple of Saikyō*). But Shintō sentiment in Izumo was too strong to be affected much by any such declaration: indeed, the recommendation of the matches as suitable for use in a Shin-shū temple was of itself sufficient to prejudice Shintōists against them. Accordingly special precautions had to be taken before safety-matches could be satisfactorily introduced into the Province of the Gods. Izumo match-boxes now bear the

* Another name for Kyōto, the Sacred City of Japanese Buddhism.

inscription: "*Pure, and fit to use for kindling the lamps of the Kami, or of the Hotoke!*"

The inevitable danger to all things in Japan is fire. It is the traditional rule that when a house takes fire, the first objects to be saved, if possible, are the household gods and the tablets of the ancestors. It is even said that if these are saved, most of the family valuables are certain to be saved, and that if these are lost, all is lost.

XI.

The terms soreisha and mitamaya, as used in Izumo, may, I am told, signify either the small miya in which the Shintō ihai (usually made of cherry-wood) is kept, or that part of the dwelling in which it is placed, and where the offerings are made. These, by all who can afford it, are served upon tables of plain white wood, and of the same high narrow form as the tables upon which offerings are made in the temples and at public funeral ceremonies.

The most ordinary form of prayer addressed to the ancient ancestors in the household cult of Shintō is not uttered aloud. After pronouncing the initial formula of all popular Shintō prayer, "*Harai-tamai*," etc., the worshipper says, with his heart only,—

"Spirits august of our far-off ancestors, ye fore-fathers of the generations, and of our families and of our kindred, unto you, the founders of our homes, we this day utter the gladness of our thanks."

In the family cult of the Buddhists a distinction is made between the household Hotoke—the souls of those long dead—and the souls of those but recently deceased. These last are called Shin-botoke, “new Buddhas,” or more strictly, “the newly dead.” No direct request for any supernatural favour is made to a Shin-botoke; for, though respectfully called Hotoke, the freshly departed soul is not really deemed to have reached Buddhahood: it is only on the long road thither, and is in need itself, perhaps, of aid, rather than capable of giving aid. Indeed, among the deeply pious its condition is a matter of affectionate concern. And especially is this the case when a little child dies; for it is thought that the soul of an infant is feeble and exposed to many dangers. Wherefore a mother, speaking to the departed soul of her child, will advise it, admonish it, command it tenderly, as if addressing a living son or daughter. The ordinary words said in Izumo homes to any Shin-botoke take rather the form of adjuration or counsel than of prayer, such as these:—

“*Jōbutsu seyō*,” or “*Jōbutsu shimasare*.” [Do thou become a Buddha.]

“*Mayō na yo*.” [Go not astray; or, Be never deluded.]

“*Miren-wo nokorazu*.” [Suffer no regret (for this world) to linger with thee.]

These prayers are never uttered aloud. Much more in accordance with the Occidental idea of prayer is the following, uttered by Shin-shū believers on behalf of a Shin-botoke:—

“*O-mukai kudasare Amida-Sama*.” [Vouchsafe, O Lord Amida, augustly to welcome (this soul).]

Needless to say that ancestor-worship, although adopted in China and Japan into Buddhism, is not of Buddhist origin. Needless also to say that Buddhism discountenances suicide. Yet in Japan, anxiety about the condition of the soul of the departed often caused suicide,—or at least justified it on the part of those who, though accepting Buddhist dogma, might adhere to primitive custom. Retainers killed themselves in the belief that by dying they might give to the soul of their lord or lady, counsel, aid, and service. Thus in the novel *Hogen-no-monogatari*, a retainer is made to say after the death of his young master:—

“Over the mountain of Shide, over the ghostly River of Sanzu, who will conduct him? If he be afraid, will he not call my name, as he was wont to do? Surely better that, by slaying myself, I go to serve him as of old, than to linger here, and mourn for him in vain.”

In Buddhist household worship, the prayers addressed to the family Hotoke proper, the souls of those long dead, are very different from the addresses made to the Shin-botoke. The following are a few examples: they are always said under the breath.

“*Kanai anzen.*” [(Vouchsafe) that our family may be preserved.]

“*Enmei sakusai.*” [That we may enjoy long life without sorrow.]

“*Shōbai hanjo.*” [That our business may prosper. (Said only by merchants and tradesmen).]

“*Shison chōkin.*” [That the perpetuity of our descent may be assured.]

“*Onteki taisan.*” [That our enemies be scattered.]

“*Yakubyō shōmetsu.*” [That pestilence may not come nigh us.]

Some of the above are used also by Shintō worshippers. The old samurai still repeat the special prayers of their caste:—

“*Tenka taihei.*” [That long peace may prevail throughout the world.]

“*Bu-un chōkyū.*” [That we may have eternal good-fortune in war.]

“*Ka-ei-manzoku.*” [That our house (*family*) may forever remain fortunate.]

But besides these silent formulae, any prayers prompted by the heart, whether of supplication or of gratitude, may, of course, be repeated. Such prayers are said, or rather thought, in the speech of daily life. The following little prayer uttered by an Izumo mother to the ancestral spirit, besought on behalf of a sick child, is an example:—

“*O-kage ni kodomo no byōki mo zenkwai itashimashite, arigatō-gozarimasu!*” [By thine august influence the illness of my child has passed away;—I thank thee.]

“*O-kage ni*” literally signifies “in the august shadow of.” There is a ghostly beauty in the original phrase that neither a free nor yet a precise translation can preserve.

XII.

Thus, in this home-worship of the Far East, by love the dead are made divine; and the foreknowledge of this tender apotheosis must temper with consolation the natural melancholy of age. Never in Japan are the

dead so quickly forgotten as with us: by simple faith they are deemed still to dwell among their beloved; and their place within the home remains ever holy. And the aged patriarch about to pass away knows that loving lips will nightly murmur to the memory of him before the household shrine; that faithful hearts will beseech him in their pain and bless him in their joy; that gentle hands will place before his *ihai* pure offerings of fruits and flowers, and dainty repasts of the things which he was wont to like; and will pour out for him, into the little cup of ghosts and gods, the fragrant tea of guests or the amber rice-wine. Strange changes are coming upon the land: old customs are vanishing; old beliefs are weakening; the thoughts of to-day will not be the thoughts of another age,—but of all this he knows happily nothing in his own quaint, simple, beautiful Izumo. He dreams that for him, as for his fathers, the little lamp will burn on through the generations; he sees, in softest fancy, the yet unborn—the children of his children's children—clapping their tiny hands in Shintō prayer, and making filial obeisance before the little dusty tablet that bears his unforgotten name.

VI. OF WOMEN'S HAIR.

I.

THE hair of the younger daughter of the family is very long; and it is a spectacle of no small interest to see it dressed. It is dressed once in every three days; and the operation, which costs four sen, is acknowledged to require one hour. As a matter of fact it requires nearly two. The hairdresser (*kamiyui*) first sends her maiden apprentice, who cleans the hair, washes it, perfumes it, and combs it with extraordinary combs of at least five different kinds. So thoroughly is the hair cleansed that it remains for three days, or even four, immaculate beyond our Occidental conception of things. In the morning, during the dusting time, it is carefully covered with a handkerchief or a little blue towel; and the curious Japanese wooden pillow, which supports the neck, not the head, renders it possible to sleep at ease without disarranging the marvellous structure.*

* Formerly both sexes used the same pillow for the same reason. The long hair of a samurai youth, tied up in an elaborate knot, required much time to arrange. Since it has become the almost universal custom to wear the hair short, the men have adopted a pillow shaped like a small bolster.

After the apprentice has finished her part of the work, the hairdresser herself appears, and begins to build the coiffure. For this task she uses, besides the extraordinary variety of combs, fine loops of gilt thread or coloured paper twine, dainty bits of deliciously tinted crape-silk, delicate steel springs, and curious little basket-shaped things over which the hair is moulded into the required forms before being fixed in place.

The *kamiyui* also brings razors with her; for the Japanese girl is shaved,—cheeks, ears, brows, chin, even nose! What is there to shave? Only that peachy floss which is the velvet of the finest human skin, but which Japanese taste removes. There is, however, another use for the razor. All maidens bear the signs of their maidenhood in the form of a little round spot, about an inch in diameter, shaven clean upon the very top of the head. This is only partially concealed by a band of hair brought back from the forehead across it, and fastened to the back hair. The girl-baby's head is totally shaved. When a few years old the little creature's hair is allowed to grow except at the top of the head, where a large tonsure is maintained. But the size of the tonsure diminishes year by year, until it shrinks after childhood to the small spot above described; and this, too, vanishes after marriage, when a still more complicated fashion of wearing the hair is adopted.

II.

Such absolutely straight dark hair as that of most Japanese women might seem, to Occidental ideas at least, ill-suited to the highest possibilities of the art of

the *coiffeuse*.* But the skill of the *kamiyui* has made it tractable to every æsthetic whim. Ringlets, indeed, are unknown, and curling irons. But what wonderful and beautiful shapes the hair of the girl is made to assume: volutes, jets, whirls, eddyings, foliations, each passing into the other blandly as a linking of brush-strokes in the writing of a Chinese master! Far beyond the skill of the Parisian *coiffeuse* is the art of the *kamiyui*. From the mythical era** of the race, Japanese ingenuity has exhausted itself in the invention and the improvement of pretty devices for the dressing of woman's hair; and probably there have never been so many beautiful fashions of wearing it in any other country as there have been in Japan. These have changed through the centuries; sometimes becoming wondrously intricate of design, sometimes exquisitely simple,—as in that gracious custom, recorded for us in so many quaint drawings, of allowing the long black tresses to flow unconfined below the waist.*** But every mode of which we have any pictorial record had its own striking charm.

* It is an error to suppose that all Japanese have blue-black hair. There are two distinct racial types. In one the hair is a deep brown instead of a pure black, and is also softer and finer. Rarely, but very rarely, one may see a Japanese *chevelure* having a natural tendency to ripple. For curious reasons, which cannot be stated here, an Izumo woman is very much ashamed of having wavy hair, —more ashamed than she would be of a natural deformity.

** Even in the time of the writing of the *Kojiki* the art of arranging the hair must have been somewhat developed. See Professor Chamberlain's introduction to translation, p. xxxi; also vol. I. section IX.; vol. VII. section XII.; vol. IX. section XVIII., *et passim*.

*** An art expert can decide the age of an unsigned *kakemono* or other work of art in which human figures appear, by the style of the coiffure of the female personages.

Indian, Chinese, Malayan, Kōrean ideas of beauty found their way to the Land of the Gods, and were appropriated and transfigured by the finer native conceptions of comeliness. Buddhism, too, which so profoundly influenced all Japanese art and thought, may possibly have influenced fashions of wearing the hair; for its female divinities appear with the most beautiful coiffures. Notice the hair of a Kwannon or a Benten, and the tresses of the Tennin,—those angel-maidens who float in azure upon the ceilings of the great temples.

III.

The particular attractiveness of the modern styles is the way in which the hair is made to serve as an elaborate nimbus for the features, giving delightful relief to whatever of fairness or sweetness the young face may possess. Then behind this charming black aureole is a riddle of graceful loopings and weavings whereof neither the beginning nor the ending can possibly be discerned. Only the *kamiyui* knows the key to that riddle. And the whole is held in place with curious ornamental combs, and shot through with long fine pins of gold, silver, nacre, transparent tortoise-shell, or lacquered wood, with cunningly carven heads.*

IV.

Not less than fourteen different ways of dressing the hair are practised by the *coiffeuses* of Izumo; but doubt-

* The principal and indispensable hair-pin (*kanzashi*), usually about seven inches long, is split, and its well-tempered double shaft

less in the capital, and in some of the larger cities of eastern Japan, the art is much more elaborately developed. The hairdressers (*kamiyui*) go from house to house to exercise their calling, visiting their clients upon fixed days at certain regular hours. The hair of little girls from seven to eight years old is in Matsue dressed usually after the style called O-tabako-bon, unless it be simply "banged." In the O-tabako-bon ("honourable smoking-box" style) the hair is cut to the length of about four inches all round except above the forehead, where it is clipped a little shorter; and on the summit of the head it is allowed to grow longer and is gathered up into a peculiarly shaped knot, which justifies the curious name of the coiffure. As soon as the girl becomes old enough to go to a female public day-school, her hair is dressed in the pretty, simple style called katsurashita, or perhaps in the new, ugly, semi-foreign "bundle-style" called sokuhatsu, which has become the regulation fashion in boarding-schools. For the daughters of the poor, and even for most of those of the middle classes, the public-school period is rather brief; their studies usually cease a few years before they are marriageable, and girls marry very early in Japan. The maiden's first elaborate coiffure is arranged for her when she reaches the age of fourteen or fifteen, at earliest. From twelve to fourteen her hair is dressed in the fashion called Omoyedzuki; then the style is changed to the beautiful coiffure called jorōwage. There are various forms of this style, more or less complex. A couple of can be used like a small pair of chopsticks for picking up small things. The head is terminated by a tiny spoon-shaped projection, which has a special purpose in the Japanese toilette.

years later, the *jorōwage* yields place in its turn to the *shinjōchō** ("new-butterfly" style), or the *shimada*, also called *takawage*. The *shinjōchō* style is common, is worn by women of various ages, and is not considered very genteel. The *shimada*, exquisitely elaborate, is; but the more respectable the family, the smaller the form of this coiffure; *geisha* and *jorō* wear a larger and loftier variety of it, which properly answers to the name *takawage*, or "high coiffure." Between eighteen and twenty years of age the maiden again exchanges this style for another termed *Tenjingaeshi*; between twenty and twenty-four years of age she adopts the fashion called *mitsuwage*, or the "triple coiffure" of three loops; and a somewhat similar but still more complicated coiffure, called *mitsuwakudzushi* is worn by young women of from twenty-five to twenty-eight. Up to that age every change in the fashion of wearing the hair has been in the direction of elaborateness and complexity. But after twenty-eight a Japanese woman is no longer considered young, and there is only one more coiffure for her,—the *mochiriwage* or *bobai*, the simple and rather ugly style adopted by old women.

But the girl who marries wears her hair in a fashion quite different from any of the preceding. The most beautiful, the most elaborate, and the most costly of all modes is the bride's coiffure, called *hanayome*, a word

* The *shinjōchō* is also called *Ichōgaeshi* by old people, although the original *Ichōgaeshi* was somewhat different. The samurai girls used to wear their hair in the true *Ichōgaeshi* manner; the name is derived from the *ichō*-tree (*Salisburia andiantifolia*), whose leaves have a queer shape, almost like that of a duck's foot. Certain bands of the hair in this coiffure bore a resemblance in form to *ichō*-leaves.

literally signifying "flower-wife." The structure is dainty as its name, and must be seen to be artistically appreciated. Afterwards the wife wears her hair in the styles called kumesa or maruwage, another name for which is katsuyama. The kumesa style is not genteel, and is the coiffure of the poor; the maruwage or katsuyama is refined. In former times the samurai women wore their hair in two particular styles: the maiden's coiffure was ichōgaeshi, and that of the married folk katahajishi. It is still possible to see in Matsue a few katahajishi coiffures.

V.

The family kamiyui, O-Koto-San, the most skilful of her craft in Izumo, is a little woman of about thirty, still quite attractive. About her neck there are three soft pretty lines, forming what connoisseurs of beauty term "the necklace of Venus." This is a rare charm; but it once nearly proved the ruin of Koto. The story is a curious one.

Koto had a rival at the beginning of her professional career,—a woman of considerable skill as a *coiffeuse*, but of malignant disposition, named Jin. Jin gradually lost all her respectable custom, and little Koto became the fashionable hairdresser. But her old rival, filled with jealous hate, invented a wicked story about Koto, and the story found root in the rich soil of old Izumo superstition, and grew fantastically. The idea of it had been suggested to Jin's cunning mind by those three soft lines about Koto's neck. She declared that Koto had a "NUKE-KUBI."

What is a nuke-kubi? "Kubi" signifies either the neck or head. "Nukeru" means to creep, to skulk, to prowl, to slip away stealthily. To have a nuke-kubi is to have a head that detaches itself from the body, and prowls about at night—by itself.

Koto has been twice married, and her second match was a happy one. But her first husband caused her much trouble, and ran away from her at last, in company with some worthless woman. Nothing was ever heard of him afterward,—so that Jin thought it quite safe to invent a nightmare-story to account for his disappearance. She said that he abandoned Koto because, on awaking one night, he saw his young wife's head rise from the pillow, and her neck lengthen like a great white serpent, while the rest of her body remained motionless. He saw the head, supported by the ever lengthening neck, enter the farther apartment and drink all the oil in the lamps, and then return to the pillow slowly,—the neck simultaneously contracting. "Then he rose up and fled away from the house in great fear," said Jin.

As one story begets another, all sorts of queer rumours soon began to circulate about poor Koto. There was a tale that some police-officer, late at night, saw a woman's head without a body, nibbling fruit from a tree overhanging some garden-wall; and that, knowing it to be a nuke-kubi, he struck it with the flat of his sword. It shrank away as swiftly as a bat flies, but not before he had been able to recognise the face of the kamiyui. "Oh! it is quite true!" declared Jin, the morning after the alleged occurrence; "and if you don't believe it, send word to Koto that you want to see her. She can't

go out: her face is all swelled up." Now the last statement was fact,—for Koto had a very severe toothache at that time,—and the fact helped the falsehood. And the story found its way to the local newspaper, which published it—only as a strange example of popular credulity; and Jin said, "Am I a teller of the truth? See, the paper has printed it!"

Wherefore crowds of curious people gathered before Koto's little house, and made her life such a burden to her that her husband had to watch her constantly to keep her from killing herself. Fortunately she had good friends in the family of the Governor, where she had been employed for years as *coiffeuse*; and the Governor, hearing of the wickedness, wrote a public denunciation of it, and set his name to it, and printed it. Now the people of Matsue reverenced their old samurai Governor as if he were a god, and believed his least word; and seeing what he had written, they became ashamed, and also denounced the lie and the liar; and the little hair-dresser soon became more prosperous than before through popular sympathy.

Some of the most extraordinary beliefs of old days are kept alive in Izumo and elsewhere by what are called in America "travelling side-shows;" and the inexperienced foreigner could never imagine the possibilities of a Japanese side-show. On certain great holidays the showmen make their appearance, put up their ephemeral theatres of rush-matting and bamboos in some temple court, surfeit expectation by the most incredible surprises, and then vanish as suddenly as they came. The Skeleton of a Devil, the Claws of a Goblin, and "a Rat

as large as a sheep," were some of the least extraordinary displays which I saw. The Goblin's Claws were remarkably fine shark's teeth; the Devil's Skeleton had belonged to an orang-outang,—all except the horns ingeniously attached to the skull; and the wondrous Rat I discovered to be a tame kangaroo. What I could not fully understand was the exhibition of a *nuke-kubi*, in which a young woman stretched her neck, apparently, to a length of about two feet, making ghastly faces during the performance.

VI.

There are also some strange old superstitions about women's hair.

The myth of Medusa has many a counterpart in Japanese folklore: the subject of such tales being always some wondrously beautiful girl, whose hair turns to snakes only at night, and who is discovered at last to be either a dragon or a dragon's daughter. But in ancient times it was believed that the hair of any young woman might, under certain trying circumstances, change into serpents. For instance: under the influence of long-repressed jealousy.

There were many men of wealth who, in the days of Old Japan, kept their concubines (*mekaké* or *aishō*) under the same roof with their legitimate wives (*okusama*). And it is told that, although the severest patriarchal discipline might compel the *mekaké* and the *okusama* to live together in perfect seeming harmony by day, their secret hate would reveal itself by night in the transformation of their hair. The long black tresses of each

would uncoil and hiss and strive to devour those of the other;—and even the mirrors of the sleepers would dash themselves together;—for, saith an ancient proverb, *kagami onna-no tamashii*,—"a Mirror is the Soul of a Woman."* And there is a famous tradition of one Kato Sayemon Shigenji, who beheld in the night the hair of his wife and the hair of his concubine, changed into vipers, writhing together and hissing and biting. Then Kato Sayemon grieved much for that secret bitterness of hatred which thus existed through his fault; and he shaved his head and became a priest in the great Buddhist monastery of Koya-San, where he dwelt until the day of his death under the name of Karukaya.

VII.

The hair of dead women is arranged in the manner called tabanegami, somewhat resembling the shimada extremely simplified, and without ornaments of any kind. The name tabanegami signifies hair tied into a bunch, like a sheaf of rice. This style must also be worn by women during the period of mourning.

Ghosts, nevertheless, are represented with hair loose and long, falling weirdly over the face. And no doubt because of the melancholy suggestiveness of its drooping branches, the willow is believed to be the favourite

* The old Japanese mirrors were made of metal, and were extremely beautiful. *Kagami ga kumoru to tamashii ga kumoru* ("When the Mirror is dim, the Soul is unclean") is another curious proverb relating to mirrors. Perhaps the most beautiful and touching story of a mirror in any language is that called *Matsuyama-no-kagami*, which has been translated by Mrs. James.

tree of ghosts. Thereunder, 'tis said, they mourn in the night, mingling their shadowy hair with the long dishevelled tresses of the tree.

Tradition says that Ōkyo Maruyama was the first Japanese artist who drew a ghost. The Shōgun, having invited him to his palace, said: "Make a picture of a ghost for me." Ōkyo promised to do so; but he was puzzled how to execute the order satisfactorily. A few days later, hearing that one of his aunts was very ill, he visited her. She was so emaciated that she looked like one already long dead. As he watched by her bedside, a ghastly inspiration came to him: he drew the fleshless face and long dishevelled hair, and created from that hasty sketch a ghost that surpassed all the Shōgun's expectations. Afterwards Ōkyo became very famous as a painter of ghosts.

Japanese ghosts are always represented as diaphanous, and preternaturally tall,—only the upper part of the figure being distinctly outlined, and the lower part fading utterly away. As the Japanese say, "a ghost has no feet;" its appearance is like an exhalation, which becomes visible only at a certain distance above the ground; and it wavers and lengthens and undulates in the conceptions of artists, like a vapour moved by wind. Occasionally phantom women figure in picture-books in the likeness of living women; but these are not true ghosts. They are fox-women or other goblins; and their supernatural character is suggested by a peculiar expression of the eyes and a certain impossible elfish grace.

Little children in Japan, like little children in all countries, keenly enjoy the pleasure of fear; and they have many games in which such pleasure forms the

chief attraction. Among these is O-bake-goto, or Ghost-play. Some nurse-girl or elder sister loosens her hair in front, so as to let it fall over her face, and pursues the little folk with moans and weird gestures, miming all the attitudes of the ghosts of the picture-books.

VIII.

As the hair of the Japanese woman is her richest ornament, it is of all her possessions that which she would most suffer to lose; and in other days the man too manly to kill an erring wife deemed it vengeance enough to turn her away with all her hair shorn off. Only the greatest faith or the deepest love can prompt a woman to the voluntary sacrifice of her entire *chevelure*, though partial sacrifices, offerings of one or two long thick cuttings, may be seen suspended before many an Izumo shrine.

What faith can do in the way of such sacrifice, he best knows who has seen the great cables, woven of women's hair, that hang in the vast Hongwanji temple at Kyōto. And love is stronger than faith, though much less demonstrative. According to ancient custom a wife bereaved sacrifices a portion of her hair to be placed in the coffin of her husband, and buried with him. The quantity is not fixed: in the majority of cases it is very small, so that the appearance of the coiffure is thereby nowise affected. But she who resolves to remain forever loyal to the memory of the lost yields up all. With her own hand she cuts off her hair, and lays the whole glossy sacrifice—emblem of her youth and beauty—upon the knees of the dead.

It is never suffered to grow again.

VII.

FROM THE DIARY OF AN ENGLISH TEACHER.

I.

MATSUE, September 2, 1890.

I AM under contract to serve as English teacher in the Jinjō Chūgakkō, or Ordinary Middle School, and also in the Shihan-Gakkō, or Normal School, of Matsue, Izumo, for the term of one year.

The Jingō Chūgakkō is an immense two-storey wooden building in European style, painted a dark grey-blue. It has accommodation for nearly three hundred day-scholars. It is situated in one corner of a great square of ground, bounded on two sides by canals, and on the other two by very quiet streets. This site is very near the ancient castle.

The Normal School is a much larger building occupying the opposite angle of the square. It is also much handsomer, is painted snowy white, and has a little cupola upon its summit. There are only about one hundred and fifty students in the Shihan-Gakkō, but they are boarders.

Between these two schools are other educational buildings, which I shall learn more about later.

It is my first day at the schools. Nishida Sentaro, the Japanese teacher of English, has taken me through the buildings, introduced me to the Directors, and to all my future colleagues, given me all necessary instructions about hours and about text-books, and furnished my desk with all things necessary. Before teaching begins, however, I must be introduced to the Governor of the Province, Koteda Yasusada, with whom my contract has been made, through the medium of his secretary. So Nishida leads the way to the Kenchō, or Prefectural office, situated in another foreign-looking edifice across the street.

We enter it, ascend a wide stairway, and enter a spacious room carpeted in European fashion,—a room with bay windows and cushioned chairs. One person is seated at a small round table, and about him are standing half a dozen others: all are in full Japanese costume, ceremonial costume,—splendid silken hakama, or Chinese trousers, silken robes, silken haori or over-dress, marked with their mon or family crests: rich and dignified attire which makes me ashamed of my commonplace Western garb. These are officials of the Kenchō, and teachers: the person seated is the Governor. He rises to greet me, gives me the hand-grasp of a giant: and as I look into his eyes, I feel I shall love that man to the day of my death. A face fresh and frank as a boy's, expressing much placid force and large-hearted kindness,—all the calm of a Buddha. Beside him, the other officials look very small: indeed the first impression of him is that of a man of another race. While I am wondering whether the old Japanese heroes were cast in a similar mould, he signs to me to take a seat, and

questions my guide in a mellow basso. There is a charm in the fluent depth of the voice pleasantly confirming the idea suggested by the face. An attendant brings tea.

"The Governor asks," interprets Nishida, "if you know the old history of Izumo."

I reply that I have read the *Kojiki*, translated by Professor Chamberlain, and have therefore some knowledge of the story of Japan's most ancient province. Some converse in Japanese follows. Nishida tells the Governor that I came to Japan to study the ancient religion and customs, and that I am particularly interested in *Shintō* and the traditions of Izumo. The Governor suggests that I make visits to the celebrated shrines of Kitzuki, Yaegaki, and Kumano, and then asks:—

"Does he know the tradition of the origin of the clapping of hands before a *Shintō* shrine?"

I reply in the negative; and the Governor says the tradition is given in a commentary upon the *Kojiki*.

"It is in the thirty-second section of the fourteenth volume, where it is written that Ya-he-Koto-Shiro-nushi-no-Kami clapped his hands."

I thank the Governor for his kind suggestions and his citation. After a brief silence I am graciously dismissed with another genuine hand-grasp; and we return to the school.

II.

I have been teaching for three hours in the Middle School, and teaching Japanese boys turns out to be a much more agreeable task than I had imagined. Each class has been so well prepared for me beforehand by Nishida that my utter ignorance of Japanese makes no difficulty in regard to teaching: moreover, although the lads cannot understand my words always when I speak, they can understand whatever I write upon the black-board with chalk. Most of them have already been studying English from childhood, with Japanese teachers. All are wonderfully docile and patient. According to old custom, when the teacher enters, the whole class rises and bows to him. He returns the bow, and calls the roll.

Nishida is only too kind. He helps me in every way he possibly can, and is constantly regretting that he cannot help me more. There are, of course, some difficulties to overcome. For instance, it will take me a very, very long time to learn the names of the boys,—most of which names I cannot even pronounce, with the class-roll before me. And although the names of the different classes have been painted upon the doors of their respective rooms in English letters, for the benefit of the foreign teacher, it will take me some weeks at least to become quite familiar with them. For the time being Nishida always guides me to the rooms. He also shows me the way, through long corridors, to the Normal School, and introduces me to the teacher Nakayama who is to act there as my guide.

I have been engaged to teach only four times a week at the Normal School; but I am furnished there also with a handsome desk in the teachers' apartment, and am made to feel at home almost immediately. Nakayama shows me everything of interest in the building before introducing me to my future pupils. The introduction is pleasant and novel as a school experience. I am conducted along a corridor, and ushered into a large luminous whitewashed room full of young men in dark blue military uniform. Each sits at a very small desk, supported by a single leg, with three feet. At the end of the room is a platform with a high desk and a chair for the teacher. As I take my place at the desk, a voice rings out in English: "*Stand up!*" And all rise with a springy movement as if moved by machinery. "*Bow down!*" the same voice again commands,—the voice of a young student wearing a captain's stripes upon his sleeve; and all salute me. I bow in return; we take our seats; and the lesson begins.

All teachers at the Normal School are saluted in the same military fashion before each class-hour,—only the command is given in Japanese. For my sake only, it is given in English.

III.

September 22, 1890.

The Normal School is a State institution. Students are admitted upon examination and production of testimony as to good character; but the number is, of course, limited. The young men pay no fees, no boarding-money, nothing even for books, college-outfits, or wear-

ing-apparel. They are lodged, clothed, fed, and educated by the State; but they are required in return, after their graduation, to serve the State as teachers for the space of five years. Admission, however, by no means assures graduation. There are three or four examinations each year; and the students who fail to obtain a certain high average of examination marks must leave the school, however exemplary their conduct or earnest their study. No leniency can be shown where the educational needs of the State are concerned, and these call for natural ability and a high standard of its proof.

The discipline is military and severe. Indeed, it is so thorough that the graduate of a Normal School is exempted by military law from more than a year's service in the army: he leaves college a trained soldier. Deportment is also a requisite: special marks are given for it; and however gawky a freshman may prove at the time of his admission, he cannot remain so. A spirit of manliness is cultivated, which excludes roughness but develops self-reliance and self-control. The student is required, when speaking, to look his teacher in the face, and to utter his words not only distinctly, but sonorously. Demeanour in class is partly enforced by the class-room fittings themselves. The tiny tables are too narrow to allow of being used as supports for the elbows; the seats have no backs against which to lean, and the student must hold himself rigidly erect as he studies. He must also keep himself faultlessly neat and clean. Whenever and wherever he encounters one of his teachers he must halt, bring his feet together, draw himself erect, and give the military salute. And this is done with a swift grace difficult to describe.

The demeanour of a class during study hours is if anything too faultless. Never a whisper is heard; never is a head raised from the book without permission. But when the teacher addresses a student by name, the youth rises instantly, and replies in a tone of such vigour as would seem to unaccustomed ears almost startling by contrast with the stillness and self-repression of the others.

The female department of the Normal School, where about fifty young women are being trained as teachers, is a separate two-storey quadrangle of buildings, large, airy, and so situated, together with its gardens, as to be totally isolated from all other buildings and invisible from the street. The girls are not only taught European science by the most advanced methods, but are trained as well in Japanese arts,—the arts of embroidery, of decoration, of painting, and of arranging flowers. European drawing is also taught, and beautifully taught, not only here, but in all the schools. It is taught, however, in combination with Japanese methods; and the results of this blending may certainly be expected to have some charming influence upon future art-production. The average capacity of the Japanese student in drawing is, I think, at least fifty per cent. higher than that of European students. The soul of the race is essentially artistic; and the extremely difficult art of learning to write the Chinese characters, in which all are trained from early childhood, has already disciplined the hand and the eye to a marvellous degree,—a degree undreamed of in the Occident,—long before the drawing-master begins his lessons of perspective.

Attached to the great Normal School, and connected by a corridor with the Jinjō Chūgakkō likewise, is a large elementary school for little boys and girls: its teachers are male and female students of the graduating classes, who are thus practically trained for their profession before entering the service of the State. Nothing could be more interesting as an educational spectacle to any sympathetic foreigner than some of this elementary teaching. In the first room which I visit a class of very little girls and boys—some as quaintly pretty as their own dolls—are bending at their desks over sheets of coal-black paper which you would think they were trying to make still blacker by energetic use of writing-brushes and what we call Indian-ink. They are really learning to write Chinese and Japanese characters, stroke by stroke. Until one stroke has been well learned, they are not suffered to attempt another—much less a combination. Long before the first lesson is thoroughly mastered, the white paper has become all evenly black under the multitude of tyro brush-strokes. But the same sheet is still used; for the wet ink makes a yet blacker mark upon the dry, so that it can easily be seen.

In a room adjoining, I see another child-class learning to use scissors—Japanese scissors, which, being formed in one piece, shaped something like the letter **U**, are much less easy to manage than ours. The little folk are being taught to cut out patterns, and shapes of special objects or symbols to be studied. Flower-forms are the most ordinary patterns, sometimes certain ideo-graphs are given as subjects.

And in another room a third small class is learning to sing; the teacher writing the music notes (*do, re, mi*)

with chalk upon a blackboard, and accompanying the song with an accordion. The little ones have learned the Japanese national anthem (*Kimi ga yo wa*) and two native songs set to Scotch airs,—one of which calls back to me, even in this remote corner of the Orient, many a charming memory: *Auld Lang Syne*.

No uniform is worn in this elementary school: all are in Japanese dress,—the boys in dark-blue kimono, the little girls in robes of all tints, radiant as butterflies. But in addition to their robes, the girls wear hakama,* and these are of a vivid, warm sky-blue.

Between the hours of teaching, ten minutes are allowed for play or rest. The little boys play at Demon-Shadows or at blindman's-buff or at some other funny game: they laugh, leap, shout, race, and wrestle, but, unlike European children, never quarrel or fight.** As for the little girls, they get by themselves, and either play at hand-ball, or form into circles to play at some round game, accompanied by song. Indescribably soft and sweet the chorus of those little voices in the round.

*Kango-kango shō-ya,
Naka yoni shō-ya,
Don-don to kunde
Jisō-San no midzu wo
Matsuba no midzu irete,
Makkuri kae-so.****

* There is a legend that the Sun-Goddess invented the first hakama, by tying together the skirts of her robe.

** Since the above was written I have had two years' experience as a teacher in various large Japanese schools; and I have never had personal knowledge of any serious quarrel between students, and have never even heard of a fight among my pupils. And I have taught some eight hundred boys and young men.

*** "Let us play the game called kango-kango. Plenteously the

I notice that the young men, as well as the young women, who teach these little folk, are extremely tender to their charges. A child whose kimono is out of order, or dirtied by play, is taken aside and brushed and arranged as carefully as by an elder brother.

Besides being trained for their future profession by teaching the children of the elementary school, the girl students of the Shihan-Gakkō are also trained to teach in the neighbouring *Kindergarten*. A delightful *Kindergarten* it is, with big cheerful sunny rooms, where stocks of the most ingenious educational toys are piled upon shelves for daily use.

IV.

October 1, 1890.

Nevertheless I am destined to see little of the Normal School. Strictly speaking, I do not belong to its staff: my services being only lent by the Middle School, to which I give most of my time. I see the Normal School students in their class-rooms only, for they are not allowed to go out to visit their teachers' homes in the town. So I can never hope to become as familiar with them as with the students of the Chūgakkō, who are beginning to call me "Teacher" instead of "Sir," and to treat me as a sort of elder brother. (I objected to the word "master," for in Japan the teacher has no need

water of Jizō-San quickly draw,—and pour on the pine-leaves,—and turn back again." Many of the games of Japanese children, like many of their toys, have a Buddhist origin, or at least a Buddhist significance.

of being masterful.) And I feel less at home in the large, bright, comfortable apartments of the Normal School teachers than in our dingy, chilly teachers' room at the Chūgakkō, where my desk is next to that of Nishida.

On the walls there are maps, crowded with Japanese ideographs; a few large charts representing zoological facts in the light of evolutional science; and an immense frame filled with little black lacquered wooden tablets, so neatly fitted together that the entire surface is uniform as that of a blackboard. On these are written, or rather painted, in white, names of teachers, subjects, classes, and order of teaching hours; and by the ingenious tablet arrangement any change of hours can be represented by simply changing the places of the tablets. As all this is written in Chinese and Japanese characters, it remains to me a mystery, except in so far as the general plan and purpose are concerned. I have learned only to recognise the letters of my own name, and the simpler form of numerals.

On every teacher's desk there is a small hibachi of glazed blue-and-white ware, containing a few lumps of glowing charcoal in a bed of ashes. During the brief intervals between classes each teacher smokes his tiny Japanese pipe of brass, iron, or silver. The hibachi and a cup of hot tea are our consolations for the fatigues of the class-room.

Nishida and one or two other teachers know a good deal of English, and we chat together sometimes between classes. But more often no one speaks. All are tired after the teaching hour, and prefer to smoke in silence. At such times the only sounds within the room are the

ticking of the clock, and the sharp clang of the little pipes being rapped upon the edges of the hibachi to empty out the ashes.

V.

October 15, 1890.

To-day I witnessed the annual athletic contests (*undō-kwai*) of all the schools in Shimane Ken. These games were celebrated in the broad castle grounds of Ninomaru. Yesterday a circular race-track had been staked off, hurdles erected for leaping, thousands of wooden seats prepared for invited or privileged spectators, and a grand lodge built for the Governor, all before sunset. The place looked like a vast circus, with its tiers of plank seats rising one above the other, and the Governor's lodge magnificent with wreaths and flags. School children from all the villages and towns within twenty-five miles had arrived in surprising multitude. Nearly six thousand boys and girls were entered to take part in the contests. Their parents and relatives and teachers made an imposing assembly upon the benches and within the gates. And on the ramparts overlooking the huge enclosure a much larger crowd had gathered, representing perhaps one third of the population of the city.

The signal to begin or to end a contest was a pistol-shot. Four different kinds of games were performed in different parts of the grounds at the same time, as there was room enough for an army; and prizes were awarded to the winners of each contest by the hand of the Governor himself.

There were races between the best runners in each class of the different schools; and the best runner of all proved to be Sakane, of our own fifth class, who came in first by nearly forty yards without seeming even to make an effort. He is our champion athlete, and as good as he is strong,—so that it made me very happy to see him with his arms full of prize books. He won also a fencing contest decided by the breaking of a little earthenware saucer tied to the left arm of each combatant. And he also won a leaping match between our older boys.

But many hundreds of other winners there were too, and many hundreds of prizes were given away. There were races in which the runners were tied together in pairs, the left leg of one to the right leg of the other. There were equally funny races, the winning of which depended on the runner's ability not only to run, but to crawl, to climb, to vault, and to jump alternately. There were races also for the little girls,—pretty as butterflies they seemed in their sky-blue hakama and many-coloured robes,—races in which the contestants had each to pick up as they ran three balls of three different colours out of a number scattered over the turf. Besides this, the little girls had what is called a flag-race, and a contest with battledores and shuttlecocks.

Then came the tug-of-war. A magnificent tug-of-war, too,—one hundred students at one end of a rope, and another hundred at the other. But the most wonderful spectacles of the day were the dumb-bell exercises. Six thousand boys and girls, massed in ranks about five hundred deep; six thousand pairs of arms rising and falling exactly together; six thousand pairs of sandalled

feet advancing or retreating together, at the signal of the masters of gymnastics, directing all from the tops of various little wooden towers; six thousand voices chanting at once the "one, two, three," of the dumb-bell drill: "*Ichi, ni,—san, shi,—go, roku,—shichi, hachi.*"

Last came the curious game called "Taking the Castle." Two models of Japanese towers, about fifteen feet high, made with paper stretched over a framework of bamboo, were set up, one at each end of the field. Inside the castles an inflammable liquid had been placed in open vessels, so that if the vessels were overturned the whole fabric would take fire. The boys, divided into two parties, bombarded the castles with wooden balls, which passed easily through the paper walls; and in a short time both models were making a glorious blaze. Of course the party whose castle was the first to blaze lost the game.

The games began at eight o'clock in the morning, and at five in the evening came to an end. Then at a signal fully ten thousand voices pealed out the superb national anthem, "*Kimi ga yo,*" and concluded it with three cheers for their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

The Japanese do not shout or roar as we do when we cheer. They chant. Each long cry is like the opening tone of an immense musical chorus: *A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a!*

VI.

It is no small surprise to observe how botany, geology, and other sciences are daily taught even in this remotest part of old Japan. Plant physiology and the nature of vegetable tissues are studied under excellent microscopes, and in their relations to chemistry; and at regular intervals the instructor leads his classes into the country to illustrate the lessons of the term by examples taken from the flora of their native place. Agriculture, taught by a graduate of the famous Agricultural School at Sapporo, is practically illustrated upon farms purchased and maintained by the schools for purely educational ends. Each series of lessons in geology is supplemented by visits to the mountains about the lake, or to the tremendous cliffs of the coast, where the students are taught to familiarise themselves with forms of stratification and the visible history of rocks. The basin of the lake, and the country about Matsue, is physiographically studied, after the plans of instruction laid down in Huxley's excellent manual. Natural History, too, is taught according to the latest and best methods, and with the help of the microscope. The results of such teaching are sometimes surprising. I know of one student, a lad of only sixteen, who voluntarily collected and classified more than two hundred varieties of marine plants for a Tōkyō professor. Another, a youth of seventeen, wrote down for me in my note-book, without a work of reference at hand, and, as I afterward discovered, almost without an omission or error, a scientific

list of all the butterflies to be found in the neighbourhood of the city.

VII.

Through the Minister of Public Instruction, His Imperial Majesty has sent to all the great public schools of the Empire a letter bearing date of the thirteenth day of the tenth month of the twenty-third year of Meiji. And the students and teachers of the various schools assemble to hear the reading of the Imperial Words on Education.

At eight o'clock we of the Middle School are all waiting in our own assembly hall for the coming of the Governor, who will read the Emperor's letter in the various schools.

We wait but a little while. Then the Governor comes with all the officers of the Kenchō and the chief men of the city. We rise to salute him: then the national arthem is sung.

Then the Governor, ascending the platform, produces the Imperial Missive,—a scroll of Chinese manuscript sheathed in silk. He withdraws it slowly from its woven envelope, lifts it reverentially to his forehead, unrolls it, lifts it again to his forehead, and after a moment's dignified pause begins in that clear deep voice of his to read the melodious syllables after the ancient way, which is like a chant:—

“*CHO-KU-GU. Chin omommiru ni waga kōso kōso kuni wo...*

“We consider that the Founder of Our Empire and

the ancestors of Our Imperial House placed the foundation of the country on a grand and permanent basis, and established their authority on the principles of profound humanity and benevolence.

“That Our subjects have throughout ages deserved well of the state by their loyalty and piety and by their harmonious co-operation is in accordance with the essential character of Our nation; and on these very same principles Our education has been founded.

“You, Our subjects, be therefore filial to your parents; be affectionate to your brothers; be harmonious as husbands and wives; and be faithful to your friends; conduct yourselves with propriety and carefulness; extend generosity and benevolence towards your neighbours; attend to your studies and follow your pursuits; cultivate your intellects and elevate your morals; advance public benefits and promote social interests; be always found in the good observance of the laws and constitution of the land; display your personal courage and public spirit for the sake of the country whenever required; and thus support the Imperial prerogative, which is coexistent with the Heavens and the Earth.

“Such conduct on your part will not only strengthen the character of Our good and loyal subjects, but conduce also to the maintenance of the fame of your worthy forefathers.

“This is the instruction bequeathed by Our ancestors and to be followed by Our subjects; for it is the truth which has guided and guides them in their own affairs and in their dealings towards aliens.

“We hope, therefore, We and Our subjects will re-

gard these sacred precepts with one and the same heart in order to attain the same ends.”*

Then the Governor and the Head-master speak a few words,—dwelling upon the full significance of His Imperial Majesty’s august commands, and exhorting all to remember and to obey them to the uttermost.

After which the students have a holiday, to enable them the better to recollect what they have heard.

VIII.

All teaching in the modern Japanese system of education is conducted with the utmost kindness and gentleness. The teacher is a teacher only: he is not, in the English sense of mastery, a master. He stands to his pupils in the relation of an elder brother. He never tries to impose his will upon them: he never scolds, he seldom criticises, he scarcely ever punishes. No Japanese teacher ever strikes a pupil: such an act would cost him his post at once. He never loses his temper: to do so would disgrace him in the eyes of his boys and in the judgment of his colleagues. Practically speaking, there is no punishment in Japanese schools. Sometimes very

* I take the above translation from a Tōkyō educational journal, entitled *The Museum*. The original document, however, was impressive to a degree that perhaps no translation could give. The Chinese words by which the Emperor refers to himself and his will are far more impressive than our Western “We” or “Our;” and the words relating to duties, virtues, wisdom, and other matters are words that evoke in a Japanese mind ideas which only those who know Japanese life perfectly can appreciate, and which, though variant from our own, are neither less beautiful nor less sacred.

mischievous lads are kept in the schoolhouse during recreation time; yet even this light penalty is not inflicted directly by the teacher, but by the director of the school on complaint of the teacher. The purpose in such cases is not to inflict pain by deprivation of enjoyment, but to give public illustration of a fault; and in the great majority of instances, consciousness of the fault thus brought home to a lad before his comrades is quite enough to prevent its repetition. No such cruel punishment as that of forcing a dull pupil to learn an additional task, or of sentencing him to strain his eyes copying four or five hundred lines, is ever dreamed of. Nor would such forms of punishment, in the present state of things, be long tolerated by the pupils themselves. The general policy of the educational authorities everywhere throughout the empire is to get rid of students who cannot be perfectly well managed without punishment; and expulsions, nevertheless, are rare.

I often see a pretty spectacle on my way home from the school, when I take the short cut through the castle grounds. A class of about thirty little boys, in kimono and sandals, bareheaded, being taught to march and to sing by a handsome young teacher, also in Japanese dress. While they sing, they are drawn up in line; and keep time with their little bare feet. The teacher has a pleasant high clear tenor: he stands at one end of the rank and sings a single line of the song. Then all the children sing it after him. Then he sings a second line, and they repeat it. If any mistakes are made, they have to sing the verse again.

It is the Song of Kusunoki Masashigé, noblest of Japanese heroes and patriots.

IX.

I have said that severity on the part of teachers would scarcely be tolerated by the students themselves, —a fact which may sound strange to English or American ears. Tom Brown's school does not exist in Japan; the ordinary public school much more resembles the ideal Italian institution so charmingly painted for us in the "Cuoré" of De Amicis. Japanese students furthermore claim and enjoy an independence contrary to all Occidental ideas of disciplinary necessity. In the Occident the master expels the pupil. In Japan it happens quite as often that the pupil expels the master. Each public school is an earnest, spirited little republic, to which director and teachers stand only in the relation of president and cabinet. They are indeed appointed by the prefectoral government upon recommendation by the Educational Bureau at the capital; but in actual practice they maintain their positions by virtue of their capacity and personal character as estimated by their students, and are likely to be deposed by a revolutionary movement whenever found wanting. It has been alleged that the students frequently abuse their power. But this allegation has been made by European residents, strongly prejudiced in favour of masterful English ways of discipline. (I recollect that an English Yokohama paper, in this connection, advocated the introduction of the birch.) My own observations have convinced me, as larger ex-

perience has convinced some others, that in most instances of pupils rebelling against a teacher, reason is upon their side. They will rarely insult a teacher whom they dislike, or cause any disturbance in his class: they will simply refuse to attend school until he be removed. Personal feeling may often be a secondary, but it is seldom, so far as I have been able to learn, the primary cause for such a demand. A teacher whose manners are unsympathetic, or even positively disagreeable, will be nevertheless obeyed and revered while his students remain persuaded of his capacity as a teacher, and his sense of justice; and they are as keen to discern ability as they are to detect partiality. And, on the other hand, an amiable disposition alone will never atone with them either for want of knowledge or for want of skill to impart it. I knew one case, in a neighbouring public school, of a demand by the students for the removal of their professor of chemistry. In making their complaint, they frankly declared: "We like him. He is kind to all of us; he does the best he can. But he does not know enough to teach us as we wish to be taught. He cannot answer our questions. He cannot explain the experiments which he shows us. Our former teacher could do all these things. We must have another teacher." Investigation proved that the lads were quite right. The young teacher had graduated at the university; he had come well recommended: but he had no thorough knowledge of the science which he undertook to impart, and no experience as a teacher. The instructor's success in Japan is not guaranteed by a degree, but by his *practical* knowledge and his capacity to communicate it simply and thoroughly.

X.

November 3, 1890.

To-day is the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor. It is a public holiday throughout Japan; and there will be no teaching this morning. But at eight o'clock all the students and instructors enter the great assembly hall of the Jinjō Chūgakkō to honour the anniversary of His Majesty's august birth.

On the platform of the assembly hall a table, covered with dark silk, has been placed; and upon this table the portraits of Their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and the Empress of Japan, stand side by side upright, framed in gold. The alcove above the platform has been decorated with flags and wreaths.

Presently the Governor enters, looking like a French general in his gold-embroidered uniform of office, and followed by the Mayor of the city, the Chief Military Officer, the Chief of Police, and all the officials of the provincial government. These take their places in silence to left and right of the platform. Then the school organ suddenly rolls out the slow, solemn, beautiful national anthem; and all present chant those ancient syllables, made sacred by the reverential love of a century of generations:—

*Ki-mi ga-a yo-o wa
 Chi-yo ni-i-i ya-chi yo ni sa-za-ré
 I-shi no
 I-wa o to na-ri-te
 Ko-ke no
 Mu-u su-u ma-a-a-dé.**

* *Kimi ga yo wa chiyo ni yachiyo ni sazare ishi no iwa o*

The anthem ceases. The Governor advances with a slow dignified step from the right side of the apartment to the centre of the open space before the platform and the portraits of Their Majesties, turns his face to them, and bows profoundly. Then he takes three steps forward toward the platform, and halts, and bows again. Then he takes three more steps forward, and bows still more profoundly. Then he retires, walking backward six steps, and bows once more. Then he returns to his place.

After this the teachers, by parties of six, perform the same beautiful ceremony. When all have saluted the portrait of His Imperial Majesty, the Governor ascends the platform and makes a few eloquent remarks to the students about their duty to their Emperor, to their country, and to their teachers. Then the anthem is sung again; and all disperse to amuse themselves for the rest of the day.

XI.

March 1, 1891.

The majority of the students of the Jinjō Chūgakkō are day-scholars only (*externes*, as we would say in France): they go to school in the morning, take their noon meal at home, and return at one o'clock to attend the brief afternoon classes. All the city students live

to narite oke no musu made. Freely translated: "May Our Gracious Sovereign reign a thousand years,—reign ten thousand thousand years,—reign till the little stone grow into a mighty rock, thick-velveted with ancient moss!"

Glimpses of Japan.

with their own families; but there are many boys from remote country districts who have no city relatives, and for such the school furnishes boarding-houses, where a wholesome moral discipline is maintained by special masters. They are free, however, if they have sufficient means, to choose another boarding-house (provided it be a respectable one), or to find quarters in some good family; but few adopt either course.

I doubt whether in any other country the cost of education—education of the most excellent and advanced kind—is so little as in Japan. The Izumo student is able to live at a figure so far below the Occidental idea of necessary expenditure that the mere statement of it can scarcely fail to surprise the reader. A sum equal in American money to about twenty dollars supplies him with board and lodging *for one year*. The whole of his expenses, including school fees, are about seven dollars a month. For his room and three ample meals a day he pays every four weeks only one yen eighty-five sen, —not much more than a dollar and a half in American currency. If very, very poor, he will not be obliged to wear a uniform; but nearly all students of the higher classes do wear uniforms, as the cost of a complete uniform, including cap and shoes of leather, is only about three and a half yen for the cheaper quality. Those who do not wear leather shoes, however, are required, while in the school, to exchange their noisy wooden geta for zori or light straw sandals.

XII.

But the mental education so admirably imparted in an ordinary middle school is not, after all, so cheaply acquired by the student as might be imagined from the cost of living and the low rate of school fees. For Nature exacts a heavier school fee, and rigidly collects her debt—in human life.

To understand why, one should remember that the modern knowledge which the modern Izumo student must acquire upon a diet of boiled rice and bean-curd was discovered, developed, and synthetised by minds strengthened upon a costly diet of flesh. National under-feeding offers the most cruel problem which the educators of Japan must solve in order that she may become fully able to assimilate the civilisation we have thrust upon her. As Herbert Spencer has pointed out, the degree of human energy, physical or intellectual, must depend upon the nutritiveness of food; and history shows that the well-fed races have been the energetic and the dominant. Perhaps mind will rule in the future of nations; but mind is a mode of force, and must be fed—through the stomach. The thoughts that have shaken the world were never framed upon bread and water: they were created by beefsteak and mutton-chops, by ham and eggs, by pork and puddings, and were stimulated by generous wines, strong ales, and strong coffee. And science also teaches us that the growing child or youth requires an even more nutritious diet than the adult; and that the student especially needs

strong nourishment to repair the physical waste involved by brain-exertion.

And what is the waste entailed upon the Japanese schoolboy's system by study? It is certainly greater than that which the system of the European or American student must suffer at the same period of life. Seven years of study are required to give the Japanese youth merely the necessary knowledge of his own triple system of ideographs,—or, in less accurate but plainer speech, the enormous alphabet of his native literature. That literature, also, he must study, and the art of two forms of his language,—the written and the spoken: likewise, of course, he must learn native history and native morals. Besides these Oriental studies, his course includes foreign history, geography, arithmetic, astronomy, physics, geometry, natural history, agriculture, chemistry, drawing, and mathematics. Worst of all, he must learn English,—a language of which the difficulty to the Japanese cannot be even faintly imagined by anyone unfamiliar with the construction of the native tongue,—a language so different from his own that the very simplest Japanese phrase cannot be intelligibly rendered into English by a literal translation of the words or even the form of the thought. And he must learn all this upon a diet no English boy could live on; and always thinly clad in his poor cotton dress without even a fire in his schoolroom during the terrible winter, only a hibachi containing a few lumps of glowing charcoal in a bed of ashes.* Is

* Stoves, however, are being introduced. In the higher government schools, and in the Normal Schools, the students who are boarders obtain a better diet than most poor boys can get at home. Their rooms are also well warmed.

it to be wondered at that even those Japanese students who pass successfully through all the educational courses the Empire can open to them can only in rare instances show results of their long training as large as those manifested by students of the West? Better conditions are coming; but at present, under the new strain, young bodies and young minds too often give way. And those who break down are not the dullards, but the pride of schools, the captains of classes.

XIII.

Yet, so far as the finances of the schools allow, everything possible is done to make the students both healthy and happy,—to furnish them with ample opportunities both for physical exercise and for mental enjoyment. Though the course of study is severe, the hours are not long: and one of the daily five is devoted to military drill,—made more interesting to the lads by the use of real rifles and bayonets, furnished by government. There is a fine gymnastic ground near the school, furnished with trapezes, parallel bars, vaulting horses, etc.; and there are two masters of gymnastics attached to the Middle School alone. There are row-boats, in which the boys can take their pleasure on the beautiful lake whenever the weather permits. There is an excellent fencing-school conducted by the Governor himself, who, although so heavy a man, is reckoned one of the best fencers of his own generation. The style taught is the old one, requiring the use of both hands to wield the sword; thrusting is little attempted,

it is nearly all heavy slashing. The foils are made of long splinters of bamboo tied together so as to form something resembling elongated fasces: masks and wadded coats protect the head and body, for the blows given are heavy. This sort of fencing requires considerable agility, and gives more active exercise than our severer Western styles. Yet another form of healthy exercise consists of long journeys on foot to famous places. Special holidays are allowed for these. The students march out of town in military order, accompanied by some of their favourite teachers, and perhaps a servant to cook for them. Thus they may travel for a hundred, or even a hundred and fifty miles and back; but if the journey is to be a very long one, only the strong lads are allowed to go. They walk in waraji, the true straw sandal, closely tied to the naked foot, which it leaves perfectly supple and free, without blistering or producing corns. They sleep at night in Buddhist temples; and their cooking is done in the open fields, like that of soldiers in camp.

For those little inclined to such sturdy exercise there is a school library which is growing every year. There is also a monthly school magazine, edited and published by the boys. And there is a Students' Society, at whose regular meetings debates are held upon all conceivable subjects of interest to students.

XIV.

April 4, 1891.

The students of the third, fourth, and fifth year classes write for me once a week brief English compositions upon easy themes which I select for them. As a rule the themes are Japanese. Considering the immense difficulty of the English language to Japanese students, the ability of some of my boys to express their thoughts in it is astonishing. Their compositions have also another interest for me as revelations, not of individual character, but of national sentiment, or of aggregate sentiment of some sort or other. What seems to me most surprising in the compositions of the average Japanese student is that they have no personal *cachet* at all. Even the handwriting of twenty English compositions will be found to have a curious family resemblance; and striking exceptions are too few to affect the rule. Here is one of the best compositions on my table, by a student at the head of his class. Only a few idiomatic errors have been corrected:—

“THE MOON.

“The Moon appears melancholy to those who are sad, and joyous to those who are happy. The Moon makes memories of home come to those who travel, and creates homesickness. So when the Emperor Godaigo, having been banished to Oki by the traitor Hojō, beheld the moonlight upon the seashore, he cried out, ‘*The Moon is heartless!*’

"The sight of the Moon *makes an immeasurable feeling in our hearts* when we look up at it through the clear air of a beauteous night.

"Our hearts ought to be pure and calm like the light of the Moon.

"Poets often compare the Moon to a Japanese [metal] mirror (*kagami*); and indeed its shape is the same when it is full.

"The refined man amuses himself with the Moon. He seeks some house looking out upon water, to watch the Moon, and to make verses about it.

"The best places from which to see the Moon are Tsukigashi, and the mountain Obasute.

"The light of the Moon shines alike upon foul and pure, upon high and low. That beautiful Lamp is neither yours nor mine, but everybody's.

"When we look at the Moon we should remember that its waxing and its waning are the signs of the truth that the culmination of all things is likewise the beginning of their decline."

Any person totally unfamiliar with Japanese educational methods might presume that the foregoing composition shows some original power of thought and imagination. But this is not the case. I found the same thoughts and comparisons in thirty other compositions upon the same subject. Indeed, the compositions of any number of middle-school students upon the same subject are certain to be very much alike in idea and sentiment—though they are none the less charming for that. As a rule the Japanese student shows little originality in the line of imagination. His imagination

was made for him long centuries ago—partly in China, partly in his native land. From his childhood he is trained to see and to feel Nature exactly in the manner of those wondrous artists who, with a few swift brush-strokes, fling down upon a sheet of paper the colour-sensation of a chilly dawn, a fervid noon, an autumn evening. Through all his boyhood he is taught to commit to memory the most beautiful thoughts and comparisons to be found in his ancient native literature. Every boy has thus learned that the vision of Fuji against the blue resembles a white half-opened fan, hanging inverted in the sky. Every boy knows that cherry-trees in full blossom look as if the most delicate of flushed summer clouds were caught in their branches. Every boy knows the comparison between the falling of certain leaves on snow and the casting down of texts upon a sheet of white paper with a brush. Every boy and girl knows the verses comparing the print of cat's-feet on snow to plum-flowers,* and that comparing the impression of bokkuri on snow to the Japanese character for the number "two."** These were thoughts of old, old poets; and it would be very hard to invent prettier ones. Artistic power in composition is chiefly shown by the correct memorising and clever combination of these old thoughts.

And the students have been equally well trained to

* *Hachi yuki ya
Neko no eshi ato
Ume no hana.*

** *Ni no ji fumi dasu
Bokkuri kana.*

discover a moral in almost everything, animate or inanimate. I have tried them with a hundred subjects—Japanese subjects—for composition; I have never found them to fail in discovering a moral when the theme was a native one. If I suggested "Fireflies," they at once approved the topic, and wrote for me the story of that Chinese student who, being too poor to pay for a lamp, imprisoned many fireflies in a paper lantern, and thus was able to obtain light enough to study after dark, and to become eventually a great scholar. If I said "Frogs," they wrote for me the legend of Ono-no-Tofu, who was persuaded to become a learned celebrity by witnessing the tireless perseverance of a frog trying to leap up to a willow-branch. I subjoin a few specimens of the moral ideas which I thus evoked. I have corrected some common mistakes in the originals, but have suffered a few singularities to stand:—

"THE BOTAN.

"The *botan* [Japanese peony] is large and beautiful to see; but it has a disagreeable smell. This should make us remember that what is only outwardly beautiful in human society should not attract us. *To be attracted by beauty only may lead us into fearful and fatal misfortune.* The best place to see the *botan* is the island of Daikonshima in the lake Nakumi. There in the season of its flowering all the island is red with its blossoms."

"THE DRAGON.

"When the Dragon tries to ride the clouds and come into heaven there happens immediately a furious

storm. When the Dragon dwells on the ground it is supposed to take the form of a stone or other object; but when it wants to rise it calls a cloud. Its body is composed of parts of many animals. It has the eyes of a tiger and the horns of a deer and the body of a crocodile and the claws of an eagle and two trunks like the trunk of an elephant. It has a moral. *We should try to be like the dragon, and find out and adopt all the good qualities of others.*"

At the close of this essay on the dragon is a note to the teacher, saying: "I believe not there is any Dragon. But there are many stories and curious pictures about Dragon."

"MOSQUITOES.

"On summer nights we hear the sound of faint voices; and little things come and sting our bodies very violently. We call them *ka*,—in English 'mosquitoes.' I think the sting is useful for us, because if we begin to sleep, the *ka* shall come and sting us, uttering a small voice;—*then we shall be bringed back to study by the sting.*"

The following, by a lad of sixteen, is submitted only as a characteristic expression of half-formed ideas about a less familiar subject.

"EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE CUSTOMS.

"Europeans wear very narrow clothes and they wear shoes always in the house. Japanese wear clothes which

are very *lenient* and they do not *shoe* except when they walk *out-of-the-door*.

“What we think very strange is that in Europe every wife loves her husband more than her parents. In Nippon there is no wife who more loves not her parents than her husband.

“And Europeans walk out in the road with their wives, which we utterly refuse to, except on the festival of Hachiman.

“The Japanese woman is treated by man as a servant, while the European woman is respected as a master. I think these customs are both bad.

“We think it is very much trouble to treat European ladies; and we do not know why ladies are so much respected by Europeans.”

Conversation in the class-room about foreign subjects is often equally amusing and suggestive:—

“Teacher, I have been told that if a European and his father and his wife were all to fall into the sea together, and that he only could swim, he would try to save his wife first. Would he really?”

“Probably,” I reply.

“But why?”

“One reason is that Europeans consider it a man’s duty to help the weaker first—especially women and children.”

“And does a European love his wife more than his father and mother?”

“Not always—but generally, perhaps, he does.”

“Why, Teacher, according to our ideas that is very immoral.”

... "Teacher, how do European women carry their babies?"

"In their arms."

"Very tiring! And how far can a woman walk carrying a baby in her arms?"

"A strong woman can walk many miles with a child in her arms."

"But she cannot use her hands while she is carrying a baby that way, can she?"

"Not very well."

"Then it is a very bad way to carry babies," etc.

XV.

May 1, 1891.

My favourite students often visit me of afternoons. They first send me their cards, to announce their presence. On being told to come in they leave their footgear on the doorstep, enter my little study, prostrate themselves; and we all squat down together on the floor, which is in all Japanese houses like a soft mattress. The servant brings zabuton or small cushions to kneel upon, and cakes, and tea.

To sit as the Japanese do requires practice; and some Europeans can never acquire the habit. To acquire it, indeed, one must become accustomed to wearing Japanese costume. But once the habit of thus sitting has been formed, one finds it the most natural and easy of positions, and assumes it by preference for eating, reading, smoking, or chatting. It is not to be recommended, perhaps, for writing with a European pen,

—as the motion in our Occidental style of writing is from the supported wrist; but it is the best posture for writing with the Japanese fude, in using which the whole arm is unsupported, and the motion from the elbow. After having become habituated to Japanese habits for more than a year, I must confess that I find it now somewhat irksome to use a chair.

When we have all greeted each other, and taken our places upon the kneeling-cushions, a little polite silence ensues, which I am the first to break. Some of the lads speak a good deal of English. They understand me well when I pronounce every word slowly and distinctly,—using simple phrases, and avoiding idioms. When a word with which they are not familiar must be used, we refer to a good English-Japanese dictionary, which gives each vernacular meaning both in the kana and in the Chinese characters.

Usually my young visitors stay a long time, and their stay is rarely tiresome. Their conversation and their thoughts are of the simplest and frankest. They do not come to learn: they know that to ask their teacher to teach out of school would be unjust. They speak chiefly of things which they think have some particular interest for me. Sometimes they scarcely speak at all, but appear to sink into a sort of happy reverie. What they come really for is the quiet pleasure of sympathy. Not an intellectual sympathy, but the sympathy of pure good-will: the simple pleasure of being quite comfortable with a friend. They peep at my books and pictures; and sometimes they bring books and pictures to show me,—delightfully queer things,—family heirlooms which I regret much that I cannot buy. They also like to

look at my garden, and enjoy all that is in it even more than I. Often they bring me gifts of flowers. Never by any possible chance are they troublesome, impolite, curious, or even talkative. Courtesy in its utmost possible exquisiteness—an exquisiteness of which even the French have no conception—seems natural to the Izumo boy as the colour of his hair or the tint of his skin. Nor is he less kind than courteous. To contrive pleasurable surprises for me is one of the particular delights of my boys; and they either bring or cause to be brought to the house all sorts of strange things.

Of all the strange or beautiful things which I am thus privileged to examine, none gives me so much pleasure as a certain wonderful kakemono of Amida Nyorai. It is rather a large picture, and has been borrowed from a priest that I may see it. The Buddha stands in the attitude of exhortation, with one hand uplifted. Behind his head a huge moon makes an aureole; and across the face of that moon stream winding lines of thinnest cloud. Beneath his feet, like a rolling of smoke, curl heavier and darker clouds. Merely as a work of colour and design, the thing is a marvel. But the real wonder of it is not in colour or design at all. Minute examination reveals the astonishing fact that every shadow and clouding is formed by a fairy text of Chinese characters so minute that only a keen eye can discern them; and this text is the entire text of two famed sutras,—the Kwammuryō-ju-kyō and the Amida-kyō,—“text no larger than the limbs of fleas.” And all the strong dark lines of the figure, such as the seams of the Buddha’s robe, are formed by the characters of the holy invocation of the Shin-shū sect, re-

peated thousands of times: "*Namu Amida Butsu!*" Infinite patience, tireless silent labour of loving faith, in some dim temple, long ago.

Another day one of my boys persuades his father to let him bring to my house a wonderful statue of Kōshi (Confucius), made, I am told, in China, toward the close of the period of the Ming dynasty. I am also assured it is the first time the statue has ever been removed from the family residence to be shown to anyone. Previously, whoever desired to pay it reverence had to visit the house. It is truly a beautiful bronze. The figure of a smiling, bearded old man, with fingers uplifted and lips apart as if discoursing. He wears quaint Chinese shoes, and his flowing robes are adorned with the figure of the mystic phoenix. The microscopic finish of detail seems indeed to reveal the wonderful cunning of a Chinese hand: each tooth, each hair, looks as though it had been made the subject of a special study.

Another student conducts me to the home of one of his relatives, that I may see a cat made of wood, said to have been chiselled by the famed Hidari Jingorō,—a cat crouching and watching, and so lifelike that real cats "have been known to put up their backs and spit at it."

XVI.

Nevertheless I have a private conviction that some old artists even now living in Matsue could make a still more wonderful cat. Among these is the venerable Arakawa Junosuke, who wrought many rare things for the Daimyō of Izumo in the Tempō era, and whose acquaintance I have been enabled to make through my school-friends. One evening he brings to my house something very odd to show me, concealed in his sleeve. It is a doll: just a small carven and painted head without a body,—the body being represented by a tiny robe only, attached to the neck. Yet as Arakawa Junosuke manipulates it, it seems to become alive. The back of its head is like the back of a very old man's head; but its face is the face of an amused child, and there is scarcely any forehead nor any evidence of a thinking disposition. And whatever way the head is turned, it looks so funny that one cannot help laughing at it. It represents a *kirakubo*,—what we might call in English “a jolly old boy,”—one who is naturally too hearty and too innocent to feel trouble of any sort. It is not an original, but a model of a very famous original,—whose history is recorded in a faded scroll which Arakawa takes out of his other sleeve, and which a friend translates for me. This little history throws a curious light upon the simple-hearted ways of Japanese life and thought in other centuries:—

“Two hundred and sixty years ago this doll was made by a famous maker of *No*-masks in the city of Kyōto, for the Emperor Go-midzu-no-O. The Emperor used to have it placed beside his pillow each night before he slept, and was very fond of it. And he composed the following poem concerning it:—

*Yo no naka wo
Kiraku ni kurase
Nani goto mo
Omoeba omou
Omowaneba koso.**

“On the death of the Emperor this doll became the property of Prince Konoye, in whose family it is said to be still preserved.

“About one hundred and seven years ago, the then Ex-Empress, whose posthumous name is Sei-Kwa-Mon-Yin, borrowed the doll from Prince Konoye, and ordered a copy of it to be made. This copy she kept always beside her, and was very fond of it.

“After the death of the good Empress this doll was given to a lady of the court, whose family name is not recorded. Afterwards this lady, for reasons which are not known, cut off her hair and became a Buddhist nun, —taking the name of Shingyō-in.

“And one who knew the Nun Shingyō-in,—a man whose name was Kondo-ju haku-in-Hokyō,—had the honour of receiving the doll as a gift.

* This little poem signifies that whoever in this world thinks much, must have care, and that not to think about things is to pass one's life in untroubled felicity.

"Now I, who write this document, at one time fell sick; and my sickness was caused by despondency. And my friend Kondo-ju-haku-in-Hokyō, coming to see me, said: 'I have in my house something which will make you well.' And he went home and, presently returning, brought to me this doll, and lent it to me,—putting it by my pillow that I might see it and laugh at it.

"Afterward, I myself, having called upon the Nun Shingyō-in, whom I now also have the honour to know, wrote down the history of the doll, and made a poem thereupon."

(Dated about ninety years ago: no signature.)

XVII.

June 1, 1891.

I find among the students a healthy tone of scepticism in regard to certain forms of popular belief. Scientific education is rapidly destroying credulity in old superstitions yet current among the unlettered, and especially among the peasantry,—as, for instance, faith in mamori and ofuda. The outward forms of Buddhism —its images, its relics, its commoner practices—affect the average student very little. He is not, as a foreigner may be, interested in iconography, or religious folk-lore, or the comparative study of religions; and in nine cases out of ten he is rather ashamed of the signs and tokens of popular faith all around him. But the deeper religious sense, which underlies all symbolism, remains with him; and the Monistic Idea in Buddhism is being strengthened and expanded, rather than weakened, by the new edu-

cation. What is true of the effect of the public schools upon the lower Buddhism is equally true of its effect upon the lower Shintō. Shintō the students all sincerely are, or very nearly all; yet not as fervent worshippers of certain Kami, but as rigid observers of what the higher Shintō signifies,—loyalty, filial piety, obedience to parents, teachers, and superiors, and respect to ancestors. For Shintō means more than faith.

When, for the first time, I stood before the shrine of the Great Deity of Kitzuki, as the first Occidental to whom that privilege had been accorded, not without a sense of awe there came to me the thought: "This is the Shrine of the Father of a Race; this is the symbolic centre of a nation's reverence for its past." And I, too, paid reverence to the memory of the progenitor of this people.

As I then felt, so feels the intelligent student of the Meiji era whom education has lifted above the common plane of popular creeds. And Shintō also means for him—whether he reasons upon the question or not—all the ethics of the family, and all that spirit of loyalty which has become so innate that, at the call of duty, life itself ceases to have value save as an instrument for duty's accomplishment. As yet, this Orient little needs to reason about the origin of its loftier ethics. Imagine the musical sense in our own race so developed that a child could play a complicated instrument so soon as the little fingers gained sufficient force and flexibility to strike the notes. By some such comparison only can one obtain a just idea of what inherent religion and instinctive duty signify in Izumo.

Of the rude and aggressive form of scepticism so

common in the Occident, which is the natural reaction after sudden emancipation from superstitious belief, I find no trace among my students. But such sentiment may be found elsewhere,—especially in Tōkyō,—among the university students, one of whom, upon hearing the tones of a magnificent temple bell, exclaimed to a friend of mine: "*Is it not a shame that in this nineteenth century we must still hear such a sound?*"

For the benefit of curious travellers, however, I may here take occasion to observe that to talk Buddhism to Japanese gentlemen of the new school is in just as bad taste as to talk Christianity at home to men of that class whom knowledge has placed above creeds and forms. There are, of course, Japanese scholars willing to aid researches of foreign scholars in religion or in folklore; but these specialists do not undertake to gratify idle curiosity of the "globe-trotting" description. I may also say that the foreigner desirous to learn the religious ideas or superstitions of the common people must obtain them from the people themselves,—not from the educated classes.

XVIII.

Among all my favourite students—two or three from each class—I cannot decide whom I like the best. Each has a particular merit of his own. But I think the names and faces of those of whom I am about to speak will longest remain vivid in my remembrance,—Ishihara, Otani-Masanobu, Adzukizawa, Yokogi, Shida.

Ishihara is a samurai, a very influential lad in his class because of his uncommon force of character. Compared with others, he has a somewhat brusque, independent manner, pleasing, however, by its honest manliness. He says everything he thinks, and precisely in the tone that he thinks it, even to the degree of being a little embarrassing sometimes. He does not hesitate, for example, to find fault with a teacher's method of explanation, and to insist upon a more lucid one. He has criticised me more than once; but I never found that he was wrong. We like each other very much. He often brings me flowers.

One day that he had brought two beautiful sprays of plum-blossoms, he said to me:—

“I saw you bow before our Emperor's picture at the ceremony on the birthday of His Majesty. You are not like a former English teacher we had.”

“How?”

“He said we were savages.”

“Why?”

“He said there is nothing respectable except God, —*his* God,—and that only vulgar and ignorant people respect anything else.”

“Where did he come from?”

“He was a Christian clergyman, and said he was an English subject.”

“But if he was an English subject, he was bound to respect Her Majesty the Queen. He could not even enter the office of a British consul without removing his hat.”

“I don't know what he did in the country he came from. But that was what he said. Now we think we

should love and honour our Emperor. We think it is a duty. We think it is a joy. We think it is happiness to be able to give our lives for our Emperor.* But he said we were only savages—ignorant savages. What do you think of that?"

"I think, my dear lad, that he himself was a savage,—a vulgar, ignorant, savage bigot. I think it is your highest social duty to honour your Emperor, to obey his laws, and to be ready to give your blood whenever he may require it of you for the sake of Japan. I think it is your duty to respect the gods of your fathers, the religion of your country,—even if you yourself cannot believe all that others believe. And I think, also, that it is your duty, for your Emperor's sake and for your country's sake, to resent any such wicked and vulgar language as that you have told me of, no matter by whom uttered."

Masanobu visits me seldom and always comes alone. A slender, handsome lad, with rather feminine features, reserved and perfectly self-possessed in manner, refined. He is somewhat serious, does not often smile; and I never heard him laugh. He has risen to the head of his class, and appears to remain there without any extraordinary effort. Much of his leisure time he devotes

* Having asked in various classes for written answers to the question, "What is your dearest wish?" I found about twenty per cent. of the replies expressed, with little variation of words, the simple desire to die "for His Sacred Majesty, Our Beloved Emperor." But a considerable proportion of the remainder contained the same aspiration, less directly stated in the wish to emulate the glory of Nelson, or to make Japan first among nations by heroism and sacrifice. While this splendid spirit lives in the hearts of her youth, Japan should have little to fear for the future.

to botany—collecting and classifying plants. He is a musician, like all the male members of his family. He plays a variety of instruments never seen or heard of in the West, including flutes of marble, flutes of ivory, flutes of bamboo of wonderful shapes and tones, and that shrill Chinese instrument called *shō*,—a sort of mouth-organ consisting of seventeen tubes of different lengths fixed in a silver frame. He first explained to me the uses in temple music of the *taiko* and *shōko*, which are drums; of the flutes called *fei* or *teki*; of the flageolet termed *hichiriki*; and of the *kakko*, which is a little drum shaped like a spool with very narrow waist. On great Buddhist festivals, Masanobu and his father and his brothers are the musicians in the temple services, and they play the strange music called *Ōjō* and *Batto*,—music which at first no Western ear can feel pleasure in, but which, when often heard, becomes comprehensible, and is found to possess a weird charm of its own. When Masanobu comes to the house, it is usually in order to invite me to attend some Buddhist or Shintō festival (*matsuri*) which he knows will interest me.

Adzukizawa bears so little resemblance to Masanobu that one might suppose the two belonged to totally different races. Adzukizawa is large, raw-boned, heavy-looking, with a face singularly like that of a North American Indian. His people are not rich; he can afford few pleasures which cost money, except one,—buying books. Even to be able to do this he works in his leisure hours to earn money. He is a perfect bookworm, a natural-born researcher, a collector of curious documents, a haunter of all the queer second-hand stores in Teramachi and other streets where old manuscripts or

prints are on sale as waste paper. He is an omnivorous reader, and a perpetual borrower of volumes, which he always returns in perfect condition after having copied what he deemed of most value to him. But his special delight is philosophy and the history of philosophers in all countries. He has read various epitomes of the history of philosophy in the Occident, and everything of modern philosophy which has been translated into Japanese,—including Spencer's "First Principles." I have been able to introduce him to Lewes and John Fiske,—both of which he appreciates,—although the strain of studying philosophy in English is no small one. Happily he is so strong that no amount of study is likely to injure his health, and his nerves are tough as wire. He is quite an ascetic withal. As it is the Japanese custom to set cakes and tea before visitors, I always have both in readiness, and an especially fine quality of kwashi, made at Kitzuki, of which the students are very fond. Adzukizawa alone refuses to taste cakes or confectionery of any kind, saying: "As I am the youngest brother, I must begin to earn my own living soon. I shall have to endure much hardship. And if I allow myself to like dainties now, I shall only suffer more later on." Adzukizawa has seen much of human life and character. He is naturally observant; and he has managed in some extraordinary way to learn the history of everybody in Matsue. He has brought me old tattered prints to prove that the opinions now held by our director are diametrically opposed to the opinions he advocated fourteen years ago in a public address. I asked the director about it. He laughed and said, "Of course that is Adzukizawa! But he is right: I was very

young then." And I wonder if Adzukizawa was ever young.

Yokogi, Adzukizawa's dearest friend, is a very rare visitor; for he is always studying at home. He is always first in his class,—the third year class,—while Adzukizawa is fourth. Adzukizawa's account of the beginning of their acquaintance is this: "I watched him when he came and saw that he spoke very little, walked very quickly, and looked straight into everybody's eyes. So I knew he had a particular character. I like to know people with a particular character." Adzukizawa was perfectly right: under a very gentle exterior, Yokogi has an extremely strong character. He is the son of a carpenter; and his parents could not afford to send him to the Middle School. But he had shown such exceptional qualities while in the Elementary School that a wealthy man became interested in him, and offered to pay for his education.* He is now the pride of the school. He has a remarkably placid face, with peculiarly long eyes, and a delicious smile. In class he is always asking intelligent questions—questions so original that I am sometimes extremely puzzled how to answer them; and he never ceases to ask until the explanation is quite satisfactory to himself. He never cares about the opinion of his comrades if he thinks he is right. On one occasion when the whole class refused to attend the lectures of a new teacher of physics, Yokogi alone refused to act with them,—arguing that although the teacher was not all that could be desired, there was no immediate possibility of his removal, and no just reason for making

* Beautiful generosities of this kind are not uncommon in Japan.

unhappy a man who, though unskilled, was sincerely doing his best. Adzukizawa finally stood by him. These two alone attended the lectures until the remainder of the students, two weeks later, found that Yokogi's views were rational. On another occasion when some vulgar proselytism was attempted by a Christian missionary, Yokogi went boldly to the proselytiser's house, argued with him on the morality of his effort, and reduced him to silence. Some of his comrades praised his cleverness in the argument. "I am not clever," he made answer: "it does not require cleverness to argue against what is morally wrong; it requires only the knowledge that one is morally right." At least such is about the translation of what he said as told me by Adzukizawa.

Shida, another visitor, is a very delicate, sensitive boy, whose soul is full of art. He is very skilful at drawing and painting; and he has a wonderful set of picture-books by the old Japanese masters. The last time he came he brought some prints to show me,—rare ones,—fairy maidens and ghosts. As I looked at his beautiful pale face and weirdly frail fingers, I could not help fearing for him,—fearing that he might soon become a little ghost.

I have not seen him now for more than two months. He has been very, very ill; and his lungs are so weak that the doctor has forbidden him to converse. But Adzukizawa has been to visit him, and brings me this translation of a Japanese letter which the sick boy wrote and pasted upon the wall above his bed:—

"Thou, my Lord-Soul, dost govern me. Thou knowest that I cannot now govern myself. Deign, I

pray thee, to let me be cured speedily. Do not suffer me to speak much. Make me to obey in all things the command of the physician.

“This ninth day of the eleventh month of the twenty-fourth year of Meiji.

“From the sick body of Shida to his Soul.”

XIX.

September 4, 1891.

The long summer vacation is over; a new school year begins.

There have been many changes. Some of the boys I taught are dead. Others have graduated and gone away from Matsue forever. Some teachers, too, have left the school, and their places have been filled; and there is a new Director.

And the dear good Governor has gone—been transferred to cold Niigata in the northwest. It was a promotion. But he had ruled Izumo for seven years, and everybody loved him, especially, perhaps, the students, who looked upon him as a father. All the population of the city crowded to the river to bid him farewell. The streets through which he passed on his way to take the steamer, the bridge, the wharves, even the roofs were thronged with multitudes eager to see his face for the last time. Thousands were weeping. And as the steamer glided from the wharf such a cry arose,—“*A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a!*” It was intended for a cheer, but it seemed to me the cry of a whole city sorrowing, and so plaintive that I hope never to hear such a cry again.

The names and faces of the younger classes are all strange to me. Doubtless this was why the sensation of my first day's teaching in the school came back to me with extraordinary vividness when I entered the class-room of First Division A this morning.

Strangely pleasant is the first sensation of a Japanese class, as you look over the ranges of young faces before you. There is nothing in them familiar to inexperienced Western eyes; yet there is an indescribable pleasant something common to all. Those traits have nothing incisive, nothing forcible: compared with Occidental faces they seem but "half-sketched," so soft their outlines are—indicating neither aggressiveness nor shyness, neither eccentricity nor sympathy, neither curiosity nor indifference. Some, although faces of youths well grown, have a childish freshness and frankness indescribable; some are as uninteresting as others are attractive; a few are beautifully feminine. But all are equally characterised by a singular placidity,—expressing neither love nor hate nor anything save perfect repose and gentleness,—like the dreamy placidity of Buddhist images. At a later day you will no longer recognise this aspect of passionless composure: with growing acquaintance each face will become more and more individualised for you by characteristics before imperceptible. But the recollection of that first impression will remain with you; and the time will come when you will find, by many varied experiences, how strangely it foreshadowed something in Japanese character to be fully learned only after years of familiarity. You will recognise in the memory of that first impression one glimpse of the race-soul, with its impersonal lovable ness and its

impersonal weaknesses,—one glimpse of the nature of a life in which the Occidental, dwelling alone, feels a psychic comfort comparable only to the nervous relief of suddenly emerging from some stifling atmospheric pressure into thin, clear, free living air.

XX.

Was it not the eccentric Fourier who wrote about the horrible faces of "the *civilized?*" Whoever it was, would have found seeming confirmation of his physiognomical theory could he have known the effect produced by the first sight of European faces in the most eastern East. What we are taught at home to consider handsome, interesting, or characteristic in physiognomy does not produce the same impression in China or Japan. Shades of facial expression familiar to us as letters of our own alphabet are not perceived at all in Western features by these Orientals at first acquaintance. What they discern at once is the race-characteristic, not the individuality. The evolutional meaning of the deep-set Western eye, protruding brow, accipitrine nose, ponderous jaw—symbols of aggressive force and habit—was revealed to the gentler race by the same sort of intuition through which a tame animal immediately comprehends the dangerous nature of the first predatory enemy which it sees. To Europeans the smooth-featured, slender, low-statured Japanese seemed like boys; and "boy" is the term by which the native attendant of a Yokohama merchant is still called. To Japanese the first red-haired, rowdy, drunken European sailors seemed fiends,

shōjō, demons of the sea; and by the Chinese the Occidentals are still called "foreign devils." The great stature and massive strength and fierce gait of foreigners in Japan enhanced the strange impression created by their faces. Children cried for fear on seeing them pass through the streets. And in remoter districts, Japanese children are still apt to cry at the first sight of a European or American face.

A lady of Matsue related in my presence this curious souvenir of her childhood: "When I was a very little girl," she said, "our daimyō hired a foreigner to teach the military art. My father and a great many samurai went to receive the foreigner; and all the people lined the streets to see,—for no foreigner had ever come to Izumo before; and we all went to look. The foreigner came by ship: there were no steamboats here then. He was very tall, and walked quickly with long steps; and the children began to cry at the sight of him, because his face was not like the faces of the people of Nihon. My little brother cried out loud, and hid his face in mother's robe; and mother reproved him and said: 'This foreigner is a very good man who has come here to serve our prince; and it is very disrespectful to cry at seeing him.' But he still cried. I was not afraid; and I looked up at the foreigner's face as he came and smiled. He had a great beard; and I thought his face was good though it seemed to me a very strange face and stern. Then he stopped and smiled too, and put something in my hand, and touched my head and face very softly with his great fingers, and said something I could not understand, and went away. After he had gone I looked

at what he put into my hand and found that it was a pretty little glass to look through. If you put a fly under that glass it looks quite big. At that time I thought the glass was a very wonderful thing. I have it still." She took from a drawer in the room and placed before me a tiny, dainty pocket-microscope.

The hero of this little incident was a French military officer. His services were necessarily dispensed with on the abolition of the feudal system. Memories of him still linger in Matsue; and old people remember a popular snatch about him,—a sort of rapidly-vociferated rigmarole, supposed to be an imitation of his foreign speech.

Tōjin no negoto niwa kinkarakuri medagashō,
Saiboji ga shinmeishite harishite keisan,
Hanryō na *Sac-r-r-r-r-e-na-nom-da-fiu.*

XXI.

November 2, 1891.

Shida will never come to school again. He sleeps under the shadow of the cedars, in the old cemetery of Tōkōji. Yokogi, at the memorial service, read a beautiful address (*saibun*) to the soul of his dead comrade.

But Yokogi himself is down. And I am very much afraid for him. He is suffering from some affection of the brain, brought on, the doctor says, by studying a great deal too hard. Even if he gets well, he will always have to be careful. Some of us hope much; for the boy is vigorously built and so young. Strong Sakane burst a blood-vessel last month and is now well. So we trust

that Yokogi may rally. Adzukizawa daily brings news of his friend.

But the rally never comes. Some mysterious spring in the mechanism of the young life has been broken. The mind lives only in brief intervals between long hours of unconsciousness. Parents watch, and friends, for these living moments to whisper caressing things, or to ask: "Is there anything thou dost wish?" And one night the answer comes:—

"Yes: I want to go to the school; I want to see the school."

Then they wonder if the fine brain has not wholly given way, while they make answer:—

"It is midnight past, and there is no moon. And the night is cold."

"No; I can see by the stars—I want to see the school again."

They make kindest protests in vain: the dying boy only repeats, with the plaintive persistence of a last wish,—

"I want to see the school again; I want to see it now."

So there is a murmured consultation in the neighbouring room; and tansu-drawers are unlocked, warm garments prepared. Then Fusaichi, the strong servant, enters with lantern lighted, and cries out in his kind rough voice:—

"Master Tomi will go to the school upon my back: 'tis but a little way; he shall see the school again."

Carefully they wrap up the lad in wadded robes; then he puts his arms about Fusaichi's shoulders like

a child; and the strong servant bears him lightly through the wintry street; and the father hurries beside Fusaichi, bearing the lantern. And it is not far to the school, over the little bridge.

The huge dark-grey building looks almost black in the night; but Yokogi can see. He looks at the windows of his own class-room; at the roofed side-door where each morning for four happy years he used to exchange his getas for soundless sandals of straw; at the lodge of the slumbering Kodzukai;*. at the silhouette of the bell hanging black in its little turret against the stars.

Then he murmurs:—

“I can remember all now. I had forgotten—so sick I was. I remember everything again. Oh, Fusaichi, you are very good. I am so glad to have seen the school again.”

And they hasten back through the long void streets.

XXII.

November 26, 1891.

Yokogi will be buried to-morrow evening beside his comrade Shida.

When a poor person is about to die, friends and neighbours come to the house and do all they can to help the family. Some bear the tidings to distant relatives; others prepare all necessary things; others, when the death has been announced, summon the Buddhist priests.**

* The college porter.

** Except in those comparatively rare instances where the family is exclusively Shintō in its faith, or, although belonging to both

It is said that the priests know always of a parishioner's death at night, before any messenger is sent to them; for the soul of the dead knocks heavily, once, upon the door of the family temple. Then the priests arise and robe themselves, and when the messenger comes make answer: "We know: we are ready."

Meanwhile the body is carried out before the family butsudan, and laid upon the floor. No pillow is placed under the head. A naked sword is laid across the limbs to keep evil spirits away. The doors of the butsudan are opened; and tapers are lighted before the tablets of the ancestors; and incense is burned. All friends send gifts of incense. Wherefore a gift of incense, however rare and precious, given upon any other occasion, is held to be unlucky.

But the Shintō household shrine must be hidden from view with white paper; and the Shintō ofuda fastened upon the house door must be covered up during all the period of mourning.* And in all that time no

faiths, prefers to bury its dead according to Shintō rites. In Matsue, as a rule, high officials only have Shintō funerals.

* Unless the dead be buried according to the Shintō rite. In Matsue the mourning period is usually fifty days. On the fifty-first day after the decease, all members of the family go to Enjōji-nada (the lake-shore at the foot of the hill on which the great temple of Enjōji stands) to perform the ceremony of purification. At Enjōji-nada, on the beach, stands a lofty stone statue of Jizō. Before it the mourners pray; then wash their mouths and hands with the water of the lake. Afterwards they go to a friend's house for breakfast, the purification being always performed at daybreak, if possible. During the mourning period, no member of the family can eat at a friend's house. But if the burial has been according to the Shintō rite, all these ceremonial observances may be dispensed with.

member of the family may approach a Shintō temple, or pray to the Kami, or even pass beneath a torii.

A screen (*biōbu*) is extended between the body and the principal entrance of the death chamber; and the *kaimyō*, inscribed upon a strip of white paper, is fastened upon the screen. If the dead be young the screen must be turned upside-down; but this is not done in the case of old people.

Friends pray beside the corpse. There a little box is placed, containing one thousand peas, to be used for counting during the recital of those one thousand pious invocations, which, it is believed, will improve the condition of the soul on its unfamiliar journey.

The priests come and recite the sutras; and then the body is prepared for burial. It is washed in warm water, and robed all in white. But the kimono of the dead is lapped over to the left side. Wherefore it is considered unlucky at any other time to fasten one's kimono thus, even by accident.

When the body has been put into that strange square coffin which looks something like a wooden palanquin, each relative puts also into the coffin some of his or her hair or nail parings, symbolising their blood. And six *rin* are also placed in the coffin, for the six *Jizō* who stand at the heads of the ways of the Six Shadowy Worlds.

The funeral procession forms at the family residence. A priest leads it, ringing a little bell; a boy bears the *ihai* of the newly dead. The van of the procession is wholly composed of men—relatives and friends. Some carry *hata*, white symbolic bannerets; some bear flowers; all carry paper lanterns,—for in Izumo the adult dead

are buried after dark: only children are buried by day. Next comes the kwan or coffin, borne palanquin-wise upon the shoulders of men of that pariah caste whose office it is to dig graves and assist at funerals. Lastly come the women mourners.

They are all white-hooded and white-robed from head to feet, like phantoms.* Nothing more ghostly than this sheeted train of an Izumo funeral procession, illuminated only by the glow of paper lanterns, can be imagined. It is a weirdness that, once seen, will often return in dreams.

At the temple the kwan is laid upon the pavement before the entrance; and another service is performed, with plaintive music and recitation of sutras. Then the procession forms again, winds once round the temple court, and takes its way to the cemetery. But the body is not buried until twenty-four hours later, lest the supposed dead should awake in the grave.

Corpses are seldom burned in Izumo. In this, as in other matters, the predominance of Shintō sentiment is manifest.

XXIII.

For the last time I see his face again, as he lies upon his bed of death,—white-robed from neck to feet, —white-girdled for his shadowy journey,—but smiling with closed eyes in almost the same queer gentle way he was wont to smile at class on learning the explanation of some seeming riddle in our difficult English tongue. Only, methinks, the smile is sweeter now, as

* But at samurai funerals in the olden time the women were robed in black.

GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN.

with sudden larger knowledge of more mysterious things. So smiles, through dusk of incense in the great temple of Tōkōji, the golden face of Buddha.

XXIV.

December 23, 1891.

The great bell of Tōkōji is booming for the memorial service,—for the tsuito-kwai of Yokogi,—slowly and regularly as a minute-gun. Peal on peal of its rich bronze thunder shakes over the lake, surges over the roofs of the town, and breaks in deep sobs of sound against the green circle of the hills.

It is a touching service, this tsuito-kwai, with quaint ceremonies which, although long since adopted into Japanese Buddhism, are of Chinese origin and are beautiful. It is also a costly ceremony; and the parents of Yokogi are very poor. But all the expenses have been paid by voluntary subscription of students and teachers. Priests from every great temple of the Zen sect in Izumo have assembled at Tōkōji. All the teachers of the city and all the students have entered the hondo of the huge temple, and taken their places to the right and to the left of the high altar,—kneeling on the matted floor, and leaving, on the long broad steps without, a thousand shoes and sandals.

Before the main entrance, and facing the high shrine, a new butsudan has been placed, within whose open doors the ihai of the dead boy glimmers in lacquer and gilding. And upon a small stand before the butsudan have been placed an incense-vessel with bundles of senko-rods and offerings of fruits, confections, rice, and flowers. Tall and beautiful flower vases on each side

of the butsudan are filled with blossoming sprays, exquisitely arranged. Before the honzon tapers burn in massive candelabra whose stems of polished brass are writhing monsters,—the Dragon Ascending and the Dragon Descending; and incense curls up from vessels shaped like the sacred deer, like the symbolic tortoise, like the meditative stork of Buddhist legend. And beyond these, in the twilight of the vast alcove, the Buddha smiles the smile of Perfect Rest.

Between the butsudan and the honzon a little table has been placed; and on either side of it the priests kneel in ranks, facing each other: rows of polished heads and splendours of vermilion silks and vestments gold-embroidered.

The great bell ceases to peal; the Segaki prayer, which is the prayer uttered when offerings of food are made to the spirits of the dead, is recited; and a sudden sonorous measured tapping, accompanied by a plaintive chant, begins the musical service. The tapping is the tapping of the mokugyo,—a huge wooden fish-head, lacquered and gilded, like the head of a dolphin grotesquely idealised,—marking the time; and the chant is the chant of the Chapter of Kwannon in the Hokkekyō, with its magnificent invocation:—

“O Thou whose eyes are clear, whose eyes are kind, whose eyes are full of pity and of sweetness,—O Thou Lovely One, with thy beautiful face, with thy beautiful eyes,—

“O Thou Pure One, whose luminosity is without spot, whose knowledge is without shadow,—O Thou forever shining like that Sun whose glory no power may

repel,—Thou Sun-like in the course of Thy mercy, pourest Light upon the world!"

And while the voices of the leaders chant clear and high in vibrant unison, the multitude of the priestly choir recite in profoundest undertone the mighty verses; and the sound of their recitation is like the muttering of surf.

The mokugyo ceases its dull echoing, the impressive chant ends, and the leading officiants, one by one, high priests of famed temples, approach the ihai. Each bows low, ignites an incense-rod, and sets it upright in the little vase of bronze. Each at a time recites a holy verse of which the initial sound is the sound of a letter in the kaimyō of the dead boy; and these verses, uttered in the order of the characters upon the ihai, form the sacred Acrostic whose name is The Words of Perfume.

Then the priests retire to their places; and after a little silence begins the reading of the saibun,—the reading of the addresses to the soul of the dead. The students speak first,—one from each class, chosen by election. The elected rises, approaches the little table before the high altar, bows to the honzon, draws from his bosom a paper and reads it in those melodious, chanting, and plaintive tones which belong to the reading of Chinese texts. So each one tells the affection of the living to the dead, in words of loving grief and loving hope. And last among the students a gentle girl rises—a pupil of the Normal School—to speak in tones soft as a bird's. As each saibun is finished, the reader lays the written paper upon the table before the honzon, and bows, and retires.

It is now the turn of the teachers; and an old man takes his place at the little table,—old Katayama, the teacher of Chinese, famed as a poet, adored as an instructor. And because the students all love him as a father, there is a strange intensity of silence as he begins, —*Kō-Shimane-Ken-Jinjō-Chūgakkō-yo-nen-sei.*

“Here upon the twenty-third day of the twelfth month of the twenty-fourth year of Meiji, I, Katayama Shōkei, teacher of the Jinjō Chūgakkō of Shimane Ken, attending in great sorrow the holy service of the dead [*tsui-fuku*], do speak unto the soul of Yokogi Tomisaburo, my pupil.

“Having been, as thou knowest, for twice five years, at different periods, a teacher of the school, I have indeed met with not a few most excellent students. But very, very rarely in any school may the teacher find one such as thou,—so patient and so earnest, so diligent and so careful in all things,—so distinguished among thy comrades by thy blameless conduct, observing every precept, never breaking a rule.

“Of old in the land of Kihoku, famed for its horses, whenever a horse of rarest breed could not be obtained, men were wont to say: ‘*There is no horse.*’ Still there are many fine lads among our students,—many *ryume*, fine young steeds; but we have lost the best.

“To die at the age of seventeen,—the best period of life for study,—even when of the Ten Steps thou hadst already ascended six! Sad is the thought; but sadder still to know that thy last illness was caused only by thine own tireless zeal of study. Even yet more sad our conviction that with those rare gifts, and with that

rare character of thine, thou wouldest surely, in that career to which thou wast destined, have achieved good and great things, honouring the names of thine ancestors, couldst thou have lived to manhood.

"I see thee lifting thy hand to ask some question; then, bending above thy little desk to make note of all thy poor old teacher was able to tell thee. Again I see thee in the ranks,—thy rifle upon thy shoulder,—so bravely erect during the military exercises. Even now thy face is before me, with its smile, as plainly as if thou wert present in the body;—thy voice I think I hear distinctly as though thou hadst but this instant finished speaking;—yet I know that, except in memory, these never will be seen and heard again. O Heaven, why didst thou take away that dawning life from the world, and leave such a one as I—old Shōkei, feeble, decrepit, and of no more use?

"To thee my relation was indeed only that of teacher to pupil. Yet what is my distress! I have a son of twenty-four years; he is now far from me, in Yokohama. I know he is only a worthless youth;* yet never for so much as the space of one hour does the thought of him leave his old father's heart. Then how must the father and mother, the brothers and the sisters of this gentle and gifted youth feel now that he is gone! Only to think of it forces the tears from my eyes: I cannot speak —so full my heart is.

"*Aa! aa!*—thou hast gone from us; thou hast gone

* Said only in courteous self-depreciation. In the same way a son, writing to his parent, would never according to Japanese ideas of true courtesy and duty sign himself "*Your affectionate son,*" but "*Your ungrateful, or unloving son.*"

from us! Yet though thou hast died, thy earnestness, thy goodness, will long be honoured and told of as examples to the students of our school.

“Here, therefore, do we, thy teachers and thy school-mates, hold this service in behalf of thy spirit,—with prayer and offerings. Deign thou, O gentle Soul, to honour our love by the acceptance of our humble gifts.”

Then a sound of sobbing is suddenly whelmed by the resonant booming of the great fish’s-head, as the high-pitched voices of the leaders of the chant begin the grand *Nehan-gyō*, the *Sutra of Nirvana*, the song of passage triumphant over the Sea of Death and Birth; and deep below those high tones and the hollow echoing of the *mokugyo*, the surging bass of a century of voices reciting the sonorous words, sounds like the breaking of a sea:—

“*Shō-gyō mu-jō, je-sho meppō*.—Transient are all. They, being born, must die. And being born, are dead. And being dead, are glad to be at rest.”

VIII.

OF A DANCING-GIRL.

NOTHING is more silent than the beginning of a Japanese banquet; and no one, except a native, who observes the opening scene could possibly imagine the tumultuous ending.

The robed guests take their places, quite noiselessly and without speech, upon the kneeling-cushions. The lacquered services are laid upon the matting before them by maidens whose bare feet make no sound. For a while there is only smiling and flitting, as in dreams. You are not likely to hear any voices from without, as a banqueting-house is usually secluded from the street by spacious gardens. At last the master of ceremonies, host or provider, breaks the hush with the consecrated formula: "*O-somatsu degozarimasu ga!—dōzo o-hashi!*" whereat all present bow silently, take up their hashi (chopsticks), and fall to. But hashi, deftly used, cannot be heard at all. The maidens pour warm saké into the cup of each guest without making the least sound; and it is not until several dishes have been emptied, and several cups of saké absorbed, that tongues are loosened.

Then, all at once, with a little burst of laughter, a number of young girls enter, make the customary pro-

stration of greeting, glide into the open space between the ranks of the guests, and begin to serve the wine with a grace and dexterity of which no common maid is capable. They are pretty; they are clad in very costly robes of silk; they are girdled like queens; and the beautifully dressed hair of each is decked with mock flowers, with wonderful combs and pins, and with curious ornaments of gold. They greet the stranger as if they had always known him; they jest, laugh, and utter funny little cries. These are the *geisha*,* or dancing-girls, hired for the banquet.

Samisen** tinkle. The dancers withdraw to a clear space at the farther end of the banqueting-hall, always vast enough to admit of many more guests than ever assemble upon common occasions. Some form the orchestra, under the direction of a woman of uncertain age; there are several samisen, and a tiny drum played by a child. Others, singly or in pairs, perform the dance. It may be swift and merry, consisting wholly of graceful posturing,—two girls dancing together with such coincidence of step and gesture as only years of training could render possible. But more frequently it is rather like acting than like what we Occidentals call dancing,—acting accompanied with extraordinary waving of sleeves and fans, and with a play of eyes and features, sweet, subtle, subdued, wholly Oriental. There are more voluptuous dances known to *geisha*, but upon ordinary occasions and before refined audiences they portray beautiful old Japanese traditions, like the legend of the fisher *Urashima*, beloved by the Sea God's daughter;

* The *Kyōto* word is *maiko*.

** Guitars of three strings.

and at intervals they sing ancient Chinese poems, expressing a natural emotion with delicious vividness by a few exquisite words. And always they pour the wine,—that warm, pale-yellow, drowsy wine which fills the veins with soft contentment, making a faint sense of ecstasy, through which, as through some poppied sleep, the commonplace becomes wondrous and blissful, and the geisha Maids of Paradise, and the world much sweeter than, in the natural order of things, it could ever possibly be:

The banquet, at first so silent, slowly changes to a merry tumult. The company break ranks, form groups; and from group to group the girls pass, laughing, prattling,—still pouring saké into the cups which are being exchanged and emptied with low bows.* Men begin to sing old samurai songs, old Chinese poems. One or two even dance. A geisha tucks her robe well up to her knees; and the samisen strike up the quick melody, "*Kompira funé-funé.*" As the music plays, she begins to run lightly and swiftly in a figure of 8, and a young man, carrying a saké bottle and cup, also runs in the same figure of 8. If the two meet on a line, the one through whose error the meeting happens must drink a cup of saké. The music becomes quicker and quicker and the runners run faster and faster, for they must keep time to the melody; and the geisha wins. In another part of the room, guests and geisha are playing *ken*. They sing as they play, facing each other, and

* It is sometimes customary for guests to exchange cups, after duly rinsing them. It is always a compliment to ask for your friend's cup.

clap their hands, and fling out their fingers at intervals with little cries; and the samisen keep time.

Choito,—don-don!
Otagaidané;
Choito,—don-don!
Oidemashitané;
Choito,—don-don!
Shimaimashitané.

Now, to play ken with a geisha requires a perfectly cool head, a quick eye, and much practice. Having been trained from childhood to play all kinds of ken,—and there are many,—she generally loses only for politeness, when she loses at all. The signs of the most common ken are a Man, a Fox, and a Gun. If the geisha make the sign of the Gun, you must instantly, and in exact time to the music, make the sign of the Fox, who cannot use the Gun. For if you make the sign of the Man, then she will answer with the sign of the Fox, who can deceive the Man, and you lose. And if she make the sign of the Fox first, then you should make the sign of the Gun, by which the Fox can be killed. But all the while you must watch her bright eyes and supple hands. These are pretty; and if you suffer yourself, just for one fraction of a second, to think how pretty they are, you are bewitched and vanquished.

Notwithstanding all this apparent comradeship, a certain rigid decorum between guest and geisha is invariably preserved at a Japanese banquet. However flushed with wine a guest may have become, you will never see him attempt to caress a girl; he never forgets that she appears at the festivities only as a human

flower, to be looked at, not to be touched. The familiarity which foreign tourists in Japan frequently permit themselves with geisha or with waiter-girls, though endured with smiling patience, is really much disliked, and considered by native observers an evidence of extreme vulgarity.

For a time the merriment grows; but as midnight draws near, the guests begin to slip away, one by one, unnoticed. Then the din gradually dies down, the music stops; and at last the geisha, having escorted the latest of the feasters to the door, with laughing cries of *Sayō-nara*, can sit down alone to break their long fast in the deserted hall.

Such is the geisha's rôle. But what is the mystery of her? What are her thoughts, her emotions, her secret self? What is her veritable existence beyond the night circle of the banquet lights, far from the illusion formed around her by the mist of wine? Is she always as mischievous as she seems while her voice ripples out with mocking sweetness the words of the ancient song?

*Kimi to neyaru ka, go sengoku toruka?
Kanno gosengoku kimi to neyo?**

Or might we think her capable of keeping that passionate promise she utters so deliciously?

* "Once more the rest beside her, or keep five thousand koku?
What care I for koku? Let me be with her!"

There lived in ancient times a hatamoto called Fuji-eda Geki, a vassal of the Shōgun. He had an income of five thousand koku of rice,—a great income in those days. But he fell in love with an inmate of the Yoshiwara, named Ayaginu, and wished to marry her.

Omae shindara tera ewu yaranu!
*Yacte konishi to sake de nomu.**

“Why, as for that,” a friend tells me, “there was O-Kama of Osaka who realised the song only last year. For she, having collected from the funeral pile the ashes of her lover, mingled them with saké, and at a banquet drank them, in the presence of many guests.” In the presence of many guests! Alas for romance!

Always in the dwelling which a band of geisha occupy there is a strange image placed in the alcove. Sometimes it is of clay, rarely of gold, most commonly of porcelain. It is reverenced: offerings are made to it, sweetmeats and rice-bread and wine; incense smoulders in front of it, and a lamp is burned before it. It is the image of a kitten erect, one paw outstretched as if inviting,—whence its name, “the Beckoning Kitten.”** It is the *genius loci*: it brings good-fortune, the patronage of the rich, the favour of banquet-givers. Now, they who know the soul of the geisha aver that the semblance of the image is the semblance of herself,—playful and pretty, soft and young, lithe and caressing, and cruel as a devouring fire.

Worse, also, than this they have said of her: that in her shadow treads the God of Poverty, and that the

When his master bade the vassal choose between his fortune and his passion, the lovers fled secretly to a farmer’s house, and there committed suicide together. And the above song was made about them. It is still sung.

* “Dear, shouldst thou die, grave shall hold thee never!

I thy body’s ashes, mixed with wine, will drink.”

** *Maneki-Neko.*

Fox-women are her sisters; that she is the ruin of youth, the waster of fortunes, the destroyer of families; that she knows love only as the source of the follies which are her gain, and grows rich upon the substance of men whose graves she has made; that she is the most consummate of pretty hypocrites, the most dangerous of schemers, the most insatiable of mercenaries, the most pitiless of mistresses. This cannot all be true. Yet this much is true,—that, like the kitten, the geisha is by profession a creature of prey. There are many really lovable kittens. Even so there must be really delightful dancing-girls.

The geisha is only what she has been made in answer to foolish human desire for the illusion of love mixed with youth and grace, but without regrets or responsibilities: wherefore she has been taught, besides *ken*, to play at hearts. Now, the eternal law is that people may play with impunity at any game in this unhappy world except three, which are called Life, Love, and Death. Those the gods have reserved to themselves, because nobody else can learn to play them without doing mischief. Therefore, to play with a geisha any game much more serious than *ken*, or at least *go*, is displeasing to the gods.

The girl begins her career as a slave, a pretty child bought from miserably poor parents under a contract, according to which her services may be claimed by the purchasers for eighteen, twenty, or even twenty-five years. She is fed, clothed, and trained in a house occupied only by geisha; and she passes the rest of her childhood under severe discipline. She is taught etiquette, grace,

polite speech; she has daily lessons in dancing; and she is obliged to learn by heart a multitude of songs with their airs. Also she must learn games, the service of banquets and weddings, the art of dressing and looking beautiful. Whatever physical gifts she may have are carefully cultivated. Afterwards she is taught to handle musical instruments: first, the little drum (*tsudzumi*), which cannot be sounded at all without considerable practice; then she learns to play the samisen a little, with a plectrum of tortoise-shell or ivory. At eight or nine years of age she attends banquets, chiefly as a drum-player. She is then the most charming little creature imaginable, and already knows how to fill your wine-cup exactly full, with a single toss of the bottle and without spilling a drop, between two taps of her drum.

Thereafter her discipline becomes more cruel. Her voice may be flexible enough, but lacks the requisite strength. In the iciest hours of winter nights, she must ascend to the roof of her dwelling-house, and there sing and play till the blood oozes from her fingers and the voice dies in her throat. The desired result is an atrocious cold. After a period of hoarse whispering, her voice changes its tone and strengthens. She is ready to become a public singer and dancer.

In this capacity she usually makes her first appearance at the age of twelve or thirteen. If pretty and skilful, her services will be much in demand, and her time paid for at the rate of twenty to twenty-five sen per hour. Then only do her purchasers begin to reimburse themselves for the time, expense, and trouble of her training; and they are not apt to be generous. For

many years more all that she earns must pass into their hands. She can own nothing, not even her clothes.

At seventeen or eighteen she has made her artistic reputation. She has been at many hundreds of entertainments, and knows by sight all the important personages of her city, the character of each, the history of all. Her life has been chiefly a night life; rarely has she seen the sun rise since she became a dancer. She has learned to drink wine without ever losing her head, and to fast for seven or eight hours without ever feeling the worse. She has had many lovers. To a certain extent she is free to smile upon whom she pleases; but she has been well taught, above all else, to use her power of charm for her own advantage. She hopes to find Somebody able and willing to buy her freedom,—which Somebody would almost certainly thereafter discover many new and excellent meanings in those Buddhist texts that tell about the foolishness of love and the impermanency of all human relationships.

At this point of her career we may leave the geisha: thereafter her story is apt to prove unpleasant, unless she die young. Should that happen, she will have the obsequies of her class, and her memory will be preserved by divers curious rites.

Some time, perhaps, while wandering through Japanese streets at night, you hear sounds of music, a tinkling of samisen floating through the great gateway of a Buddhist temple, together with shrill voices of singing-girls; which may seem to you a strange happening. And the deep court is thronged with people looking and listening. Then, making your way through the press to the temple steps, you see two geisha seated upon the

matting within, playing and singing, and a third dancing before a little table. Upon the table is an *ihai*, or mortuary tablet; in front of the tablet burns a little lamp, and incense in a cup of bronze; a small repast has been placed there, fruits and dainties,—such a repast as, upon festival occasions, it is the custom to offer to the dead. You learn that the *kaimyō* upon the tablet is that of a geisha; and that the comrades of the dead girl assemble in the temple on certain days to gladden her spirit with songs and dances. Then who-soever pleases may attend the ceremony free of charge.

But the dancing-girls of ancient times were not as the geisha of to-day. Some of them were called *shirabyōshi*; and their hearts were not extremely hard. They were beautiful; they wore queerly shaped caps bedecked with gold; they were clad in splendid attire, and danced with swords in the dwellings of princes. And there is an old story about one of them which I think it worth while to tell.

I.

It was formerly, and indeed still is, a custom with young Japanese artists to travel on foot through various parts of the empire, in order to see and sketch the most celebrated scenery as well as to study famous art objects preserved in Buddhist temples, many of which occupy sites of extraordinary picturesqueness. It is to such wanderings, chiefly, that we owe the existence of those beautiful books of landscape views and life studies

which are now so curious and rare; and which teach better than aught else that only the Japanese can paint Japanese scenery. After you have become acquainted with their methods of interpreting their own nature, foreign attempts in the same line will seem to you strangely flat and soulless. The foreign artist will give you realistic reflections of what he sees; but he will give you nothing more. The Japanese artist gives you that which he feels,—the mood of a season, the precise sensation of an hour and place; his work is qualified by a power of suggestiveness rarely found in the art of the West. The Occidental painter renders minute detail; he satisfies the imagination he evokes. But his Oriental brother either suppresses or idealises detail,—steeps his distances in mist, bands his landscapes with cloud, makes of his experience a memory in which only the strange and the beautiful survive, with their sensations. He surpasses imagination, excites it, leaves it hungry with the hunger of charm perceived in glimpses only. Nevertheless, in such glimpses he is able to convey the feeling of a time, the character of a place, after a fashion that seems magical. He is a painter of recollections and of sensations rather than of clear-cut realities; and in this lies the secret of his amazing power,—a power not to be appreciated by those who have never witnessed the scenes of his inspiration. He is above all things impersonal. His human figures are devoid of all individuality; yet they have inimitable merit as types embodying the characteristics of a class: the childish curiosity of the peasant, the shyness of the maiden, the fascination of the *jorō*, the self-consciousness of the samurai, the funny, placid prettiness of the child, the resigned

gentleness of age. Travel and observation were the influences which developed this art; it was never a growth of studios.

A great many years ago, a young art student was travelling on foot from Kyōto to Yedo, over the mountains. The roads then were few and bad, and travel was so difficult compared to what it is now that a proverb was current, *Kawai ko wa tabi wo sasé* (A pet child should be made to travel). But the land was what it is to-day. There were the same forests of cedar and of pine, the same groves of bamboo, the same peaked villages with roofs of thatch, the same terraced rice-fields dotted with the great yellow straw hats of peasants bending in the slime. From the wayside, the same statues of Jizō smiled upon the same pilgrim figures passing to the same temples; and then, as now, of summer days, one might see naked brown children laughing in all the shallow rivers, and all the rivers laughing to the sun.

The young art student, however, was no *kawai ko*: he had already travelled a great deal, was inured to hard fare and rough lodging, and accustomed to make the best of every situation. But upon this journey he found himself, one evening after sunset, in a region where it seemed possible to obtain neither fare nor lodging of any sort,—out of sight of cultivated land. While attempting a short cut over a range to reach some village, he had lost his way.

There was no moon, and pine shadows made blackness all around him. The district into which he had wandered seemed utterly wild; there were no sounds but

the humming of the wind in the pine-needles, and an infinite tinkling of bell-insects. He stumbled on, hoping to gain some river bank, which he could follow to a settlement. At last a stream abruptly crossed his way; but it proved to be a swift torrent pouring into a gorge between precipices. Obliged to retrace his steps, he resolved to climb to the nearest summit, whence he might be able to discern some sign of human life; but on reaching it he could see about him only a heaping of hills.

He had almost resigned himself to passing the night under the stars, when he perceived, at some distance down the farther slope of the hill he had ascended, a single thin yellow ray of light, evidently issuing from some dwelling. He made his way towards it, and soon discerned a small cottage, apparently a peasant's home. The light he had seen still streamed from it, through a chink in the closed storm-doors. He hastened forward, and knocked at the entrance.

II.

Not until he had knocked and called several times did he hear any stir within; then a woman's voice asked what was wanted. The voice was remarkably sweet, and the speech of the unseen questioner surprised him, for she spoke in the cultivated idiom of the capital. He responded that he was a student, who had lost his way in the mountains; that he wished, if possible, to obtain food and lodging for the night; and that if this could not be given, he would feel very grateful for in-

formation how to reach the nearest village,—adding that he had means enough to pay for the services of a guide. The voice, in return, asked several other questions, indicating extreme surprise that anyone could have reached the dwelling from the direction he had taken. But his answers evidently allayed suspicion, for the inmate exclaimed: "I will come in a moment. It would be difficult for you to reach any village to-night; and the path is dangerous."

After a brief delay the storm-doors were pushed open, and a woman appeared with a paper lantern, which she so held as to illuminate the stranger's face, while her own remained in shadow. She scrutinised him in silence, then said briefly, "Wait; I will bring water." She fetched a wash-basin, set it upon the doorstep, and offered the guest a towel. He removed his sandals, washed from his feet the dust of travel, and was shown into a neat room which appeared to occupy the whole interior, except a small boarded space at the rear, used as a kitchen. A cotton zabuton was laid for him to kneel upon, and a brazier set before him.

It was only then that he had a good opportunity of observing his hostess, and he was startled by the delicacy and beauty of her features. She might have been three or four years older than he, but was still in the bloom of youth. Certainly she was not a peasant girl. In the same singularly sweet voice she said to him: "I am now alone, and I never receive guests here. But I am sure it would be dangerous for you to travel farther to-night. There are some peasants in the neighbourhood, but you cannot find your way to them in the dark without a guide. So I can let you stay

here until morning. You will not be comfortable, but I can give you a bed. And I suppose you are hungry. There is only some *shōjin-ryōri*,*—not at all good, but you are welcome to it."

The traveller was quite hungry, and only too glad of the offer. The young woman kindled a little fire, prepared a few dishes in silence,—stewed leaves of *na*, some *aburagé*, some *kampyō*, and a bowl of coarse rice,—and quickly set the meal before him, apologising for its quality. But during his repast she spoke scarcely at all, and her reserved manner embarrassed him. As she answered the few questions he ventured upon merely by a bow or by a solitary word, he soon refrained from attempting to press the conversation.

Meanwhile, he had observed that the small house was spotlessly clean, and the utensils in which his food was served were immaculate. The few cheap objects in the apartment were pretty. The *fusuma* of the *oshiire* and *zendana*** were of white paper only, but had been decorated with large Chinese characters exquisitely written, characters suggesting, according to the law of such decoration, the favourite themes of the poet and artist: Spring Flowers, Mountain and Sea, Summer Rain, Sky and Stars, Autumn Moon, River Water, Autumn Breeze. At one side of the apartment stood a kind of low altar, supporting a *butsudan*, whose tiny lacquered doors, left open, showed a mortuary tablet

* Buddhist food, containing no animal substance. Some kinds of *shōjin-ryōri* are quite appetising.

** The terms *oshiire* and *zendana* might be partly rendered by "wardrobe" and "cupboard." The *fusuma* are sliding screens serving as doors.

within, before which a lamp was burning between offerings of wild-flowers. And above this household shrine hung a picture of more than common merit, representing the Goddess of Mercy, wearing the moon for her aureole.

As the student ended his little meal the young woman observed: "I cannot offer you a good bed, and there is only a paper mosquito-curtain. The bed and the curtain are mine, but to-night I have many things to do, and shall have no time to sleep; therefore I beg you will try to rest, though I am not able to make you comfortable."

He then understood that she was, for some strange reason, entirely alone, and was voluntarily giving up her only bed to him upon a kindly pretext. He protested honestly against such an excess of hospitality, and assured her that he could sleep quite soundly anywhere on the floor, and did not care about the mosquitoes. But she replied, in the tone of an elder sister, that he must obey her wishes. She really had something to do, and she desired to be left by herself as soon as possible; therefore, understanding him to be a gentleman, she expected he would suffer her to arrange matters in her own way. To this he could offer no objection, as there was but one room. She spread the mattress on the floor, fetched a wooden pillow, suspended her paper mosquito-curtain, unfolded a large screen on the side of the bed toward the butsudan, and then bade him good night in a manner that assured him she wished him to retire at once; which he did, not without some reluctance at the thought of all the trouble he had unintentionally caused her.

III.

Unwilling as the young traveller felt to accept a kindness involving the sacrifice of another's repose, he found the bed more than comfortable. He was very tired, and had scarcely laid his head upon the wooden pillow before he forgot everything in sleep.

Yet only a little while seemed to have passed when he was awakened by a singular sound. It was certainly the sound of feet, but not of feet walking softly. It seemed rather the sound of feet in rapid motion, as of excitement. Then it occurred to him that robbers might have entered the house. As for himself, he had little to fear because he had little to lose. His anxiety was chiefly for the kind person who had granted him hospitality. Into each side of the paper mosquito-curtain a small square of brown netting had been fitted, like a little window, and through one of these he tried to look; but the high screen stood between him and whatever was going on. He thought of calling, but this impulse was checked by the reflection that in case of real danger it would be both useless and imprudent to announce his presence before understanding the situation. The sounds which had made him uneasy continued, and were more and more mysterious. He resolved to prepare for the worst, and to risk his life, if necessary, in order to defend his young hostess. Hastily girding up his robes, he slipped noiselessly from under the paper curtain, crept to the edge of the screen, and peeped. What he saw astonished him **extremely**.

Before her illuminated butsudan the young woman, magnificently attired, was dancing all alone. Her costume he recognised as that of a shirabyōshi, though much richer than any he had ever seen worn by a professional dancer. Marvellously enhanced by it, her beauty, in that lonely time and place, appeared almost supernatural; but what seemed to him even more wonderful was her dancing. For an instant he felt the tingling of a weird doubt. The superstitions of peasants, the legends of Fox-women, flashed before his imagination; but the sight of the Buddhist shrine, of the sacred picture, dissipated the fancy, and shamed him for the folly of it. At the same time he became conscious that he was watching something she had not wished him to see, and that it was his duty, as her guest, to return at once behind the screen; but the spectacle fascinated him. He felt, with not less pleasure than amazement, that he was looking upon the most accomplished dancer he had ever seen; and the more he watched, the more the witchery of her grace grew upon him. Suddenly she paused, panting, unfastened her girdle, turned in the act of doffing her upper robe, and started violently as her eyes encountered his own.

He tried at once to excuse himself to her. He said he had been suddenly awakened by the sound of quick feet, which sound had caused him some uneasiness, chiefly for her sake, because of the lateness of the hour and the lonesomeness of the place. Then he confessed his surprise at what he had seen, and spoke of the manner in which it had attracted him. "I beg you," he continued, "to forgive my curiosity, for I cannot help wondering who you are, and how you could have be-

come so marvellous a dancer. All the dancers of Saikyō I have seen, yet I have never seen among the most celebrated of them a girl who could dance like you; and once I had begun to watch you, I could not take away my eyes."

At first she had seemed angry, but before he had ceased to speak her expression changed. She smiled, and seated herself before him. "No, I am not angry with you," she said. "I am only sorry that you should have watched me, for I am sure you must have thought me mad when you saw me dancing that way, all by myself; and now I must tell you the meaning of what you have seen."

So she related her story. Her name he remembered to have heard as a boy,—her professional name, the name of the most famous of shirabyōshi, the darling of the capital, who, in the zenith of her fame and beauty, had suddenly vanished from public life, none knew whither or why. She had fled from wealth and fortune with a youth who loved her. He was poor, but between them they possessed enough means to live simply and happily in the country. They built a little house in the mountains, and there for a number of years they existed only for each other. He adored her. One of his greatest pleasures was to see her dance. Each evening he would play some favourite melody, and she would dance for him. But one long cold winter he fell sick, and, in spite of her tender nursing, died. Since then she had lived alone with the memory of him, performing all those small rites of love and homage with which the dead are honoured. Daily before his tablet she placed the customary offerings, and nightly danced to please

him, as of old. And this was the explanation of what the young traveller had seen. It was indeed rude, she continued, to have awakened her tired guest; but she had waited until she thought him soundly sleeping, and then she had tried to dance very, very lightly. So she hoped he would pardon her for having unintentionally disturbed him.

When she had told him all, she made ready a little tea, which they drank together; then she entreated him so plaintively to please her by trying to sleep again that he found himself obliged to go back, with many sincere apologies, under the paper mosquito-curtain.

He slept well and long; the sun was high before he woke. On rising, he found prepared for him a meal as simple as that of the evening before, and he felt hungry. Nevertheless he ate sparingly, fearing the young woman might have stinted herself in thus providing for him; and then he made ready to depart. But when he wanted to pay her for what he had received, and for all the trouble he had given her, she refused to take anything from him, saying: "What I had to give was not worth money, and what I did was done for kindness alone. So I pray that you will try to forget the discomfort you suffered here, and will remember only the good-will of one who had nothing to offer."

He still endeavoured to induce her to accept something; but at last, finding that his insistence only gave her pain, he took leave of her with such words as he could find to express his gratitude, and not without a secret regret, for her beauty and her gentleness had charmed him more than he would have liked to acknowledge to any but herself. She indicated to him the

path to follow, and watched him descend the mountain until he had passed from sight. An hour later he found himself upon a highway with which he was familiar. Then a sudden remorse touched him: he had forgotten to tell her his name: For an instant he hesitated; then said to himself, "What matters it? I shall be always poor." And he went on.

IV.

Many years passed by, and many fashions with them; and the painter became old. But ere becoming old he had become famous. Princes, charmed by the wonder of his work, had vied with one another in giving him patronage; so that he grew rich, and possessed a beautiful dwelling of his own in the City of the Emperors. Young artists from many provinces were his pupils, and lived with him, serving him in all things while receiving his instruction; and his name was known throughout the land.

Now, there came one day to his house an old woman, who asked to speak with him. The servants, seeing that she was meanly dressed and of miserable appearance, took her to be some common beggar, and questioned her roughly. But when she answered: "I can tell to no one except your master why I have come," they believed her mad, and deceived her, saying: "He is not now in Saikyō, nor do we know how soon he will return."

But the old woman came again and again,—day after day, and week after week,—each time being told something that was not true: "To-day he is ill," or,

"To-day he is very busy," or, "To-day he has much company, and therefore cannot see you." Nevertheless she continued to come, always at the same hour each day, and always carrying a bundle wrapped in a ragged covering; and the servants at last thought it were best to speak to their master about her. So they said to him: "There is a very old woman, whom we take to be a beggar, at our lord's gate. More than fifty times she has come, asking to see our lord, and refusing to tell us why,—saying that she can tell her wishes only to our lord. And we have tried to discourage her, as she seemed to be mad; but she always comes. Therefore we have presumed to mention the matter to our lord, in order that we may learn what is to be done hereafter."

Then the Master answered sharply: "Why did none of you tell me of this before?" and went out himself to the gate, and spoke very kindly to the woman, remembering how he also had been poor. And he asked her if she desired alms of him.

But she answered that she had no need of money or of food, and only desired that he would paint for her a picture. He wondered at her wish, and bade her enter his house. So she entered into the vestibule, and, kneeling there, began to untie the knots of the bundle she had brought with her. When she had unwrapped it, the painter perceived curious rich quaint garments of silk broidered with designs in gold, yet much frayed and discoloured by wear and time,—the wreck of a wonderful costume of other days, the attire of a shirabyōshi.

While the old woman unfolded the garments one by one, and tried to smoothe them with her trembling fingers, a memory stirred in the Master's brain, thrilled dimly

there a little space, then suddenly lighted up. In that soft shock of recollection, he saw again the lonely mountain dwelling in which he had received unremunerated hospitality,—the tiny room prepared for his rest, the paper mosquito-curtain, the faintly burning lamp before the Buddhist shrine, the strange beauty of one dancing there alone in the dead of the night. Then, to the astonishment of the aged visitor, he, the favoured of princes, bowed low before her, and said: “Pardon my rudeness in having forgotten your face for a moment; but it is more than forty years since we last saw each other. Now I remember you well. You received me once at your house. You gave up to me the only bed you had. I saw you dance, and you told me all your story. You had been a *shirabyōshi*, and I have not forgotten your name.”

He uttered it. She, astonished and confused, could not at first reply to him, for she was old, and had suffered much, and her memory had begun to fail. But he spoke more and more kindly to her, and reminded her of many things which she had told him, and described to her the house in which she had lived alone, so that at last she also remembered; and she answered, with tears of pleasure: “Surely the Divine One who looketh down above the sound of prayer has guided me. But when my unworthy home was honoured by the visit of the august Master, I was not as I now am. And it seems to me like a miracle of our Lord Buddha that the Master should remember me.”

Then she related the rest of her simple story. In the course of years, she had become, through poverty, obliged to part with her little house; and in her old age

she had returned alone to the great city, in which her name had long been forgotten. It had caused her much pain to lose her home; but it grieved her still more that, in becoming weak and old, she could no longer dance each evening before the butsudan, to please the spirit of the dead whom she had loved. Therefore she wanted to have a picture of herself painted, in the costume and the attitude of the dance, that she might suspend it before the butsudan. For this she had prayed earnestly to Kwannon. And she had sought out the Master because of his fame as a painter, since she desired, for the sake of the dead, no common work, but a picture painted with great skill; and she had brought her dancing-attire, hoping that the Master might be willing to paint her therein.

He listened to all with a kindly smile, and answered her: "It will be only a pleasure for me to paint the picture which you want. This day I have something to finish which cannot be delayed. But if you will come here to-morrow, I will paint you exactly as you wish, and as well as I am able."

But she said: "I have not yet told to the Master the thing which most troubles me. And it is this,—that I can offer in return for so great a favour nothing except these dancer's clothes; and they are of no value in themselves, though they were costly once. Still, I hoped the Master might be willing to take them, seeing they have become curious; for there are no more shirabyōshi, and the maiko of these times wear no such robes."

"Of that matter," the good painter exclaimed, "you must not think at all! No; I am glad to have this pre-

sent chance of paying a small part of my old debt to you. So to-morrow I will paint you just as you wish."

She prostrated herself thrice before him, uttering thanks, and then said, "Let my lord pardon, though I have yet something more to say. For I do not wish that he should paint me as I now am, but only as I used to be when I was young, as my lord knew me."

He said: "I remember well. You were very beautiful."

Her wrinkled features lighted up with pleasure, as she bowed her thanks to him for those words. And she exclaimed: "Then indeed all that I hoped and prayed for may be done! Since he thus remembers my poor youth, I beseech my lord to paint me, not as I now am, but as he saw me when I was not old and, as it has pleased him generously to say, not uncomely. O Master, make me young again! Make me seem beautiful that I may seem beautiful to the soul of him for whose sake I, the unworthy, beseech this! He will see the Master's work: he will forgive me that I can no longer dance."

Once more the Master bade her have no anxiety, and said: "Come to-morrow, and I will paint you. I will make a picture of you just as you were when I saw you, a young and beautiful shirabyōshi, and I will paint it as carefully and as skilfully as if I were painting the picture of the richest⁺ person in the land. Never doubt, but come."

V.

So the aged dancer came at the appointed hour; and upon soft white silk the artist painted a picture of her. Yet not a picture of her as she seemed to the Master's pupils; but the memory of her as she had been in the days of her youth, bright-eyed as a bird, lithe as a bamboo, dazzling as a tennin* in her raiment of silk and gold. Under the magic of the Master's brush, the vanished grace returned, the faded beauty bloomed again. When the kakemono had been finished, and stamped with his seal, he mounted it richly upon silken cloth, and fixed to it rollers of cedar with ivory weights, and a silken cord by which to hang it; and he placed it in a little box of white wood, and so gave it to the shirabyōshi. And he would also have presented her with a gift of money. But though he pressed her earnestly, he could not persuade her to accept his help. "Nay," she made answer, with tears, "indeed I need nothing. The picture only I desired. For that I prayed; and now my prayer has been answered, and I know that I never can wish for anything more in this life, and that if I come to die thus desiring nothing, to enter upon the way of Buddha will not be difficult. One thought alone causes me sorrow,—that I have nothing to offer to the Master but this dancer's apparel, which is indeed of little worth, though I beseech him to accept it; and I will pray each day that his future life may be a life

* *Tennin*, a "Sky-Maiden," a Buddhist angel.

of happiness, because of the wondrous kindness which he has done me."

"Nay," protested the painter, smiling, "what is it that I have done? Truly nothing. As for the dancer's garments, I will accept them, if that can make you more happy. They will bring back pleasant memories of the night I passed in your home, when you gave up all your comforts for my unworthy sake, and yet would not suffer me to pay for that which I used; and for that kindness I hold myself to be still in your debt. But now tell me where you live, so that I may see the picture in its place." For he had resolved within himself to place her beyond the reach of want.

But she excused herself with humble words, and would not tell him, saying that her dwelling-place was too mean to be looked upon by such as he; and then, with many prostrations, she thanked him again and again, and went away with her treasure, weeping for joy.

Then the Master called to one of his pupils: "Go quickly after that woman, but so that she does not know herself followed, and bring me word where she lives." So the young man followed her, unperceived.

He remained long away, and when he returned he laughed in the manner of one obliged to say something which it is not pleasant to hear, and he said: "That woman, O Master, I followed out of the city to the dry bed of the river, near to the place where criminals are executed. There I saw a hut such as an Eta might dwell in, and that is where she lives. A forsaken and filthy place, O Master!"

"Nevertheless," the painter replied, "to-morrow you will take me to that forsaken and filthy place. What

time I live she shall not suffer for food or clothing or comfort."

And as all wondered, he told them the story of the shirabyōshi, after which it did not seem to them that his words were strange.

VI.

On the morning of the day following, an hour after sunrise, the Master and his pupil took their way to the dry bed of the river, beyond the verge of the city, to the place of outcasts.

The entrance of the little dwelling they found closed by a single shutter, upon which the Master tapped many times without evoking a response. Then, finding the shutter unfastened from within, he pushed it slightly aside, and called through the aperture. None replied, and he decided to enter. Simultaneously, with extraordinary vividness, there thrilled back to him the sensation of the very instant when, as a tired lad, he stood pleading for admission to the lonesome little cottage among the hills.

Entering alone softly, he perceived that the woman was lying there, wrapped in a single thin and tattered futon, seemingly asleep. On a rude shelf he recognised the butsudan of forty years before, with its tablet, and now, as then, a tiny lamp was burning in front of the kaimyō. The kakemono of the Goddess of Mercy with her lunar aureole was gone, but on the wall facing the shrine he beheld his own dainty gift suspended, and

an ofuda beneath it,—an ofuda of Hito-koto-Kwannon,* —that Kwannon unto whom it is unlawful to pray more than once, as she answers but a single prayer. There was little else in the desolate dwelling; only the garments of a female pilgrim, and a mendicant's staff and bowl.

But the Master did not pause to look at these things, for he desired to awaken and to gladden the sleeper, and he called her name cheerily twice and thrice.

Then suddenly he saw that she was dead, and he wondered while he gazed upon her face, for it seemed less old. A vague sweetness, like a ghost of youth, had returned to it; the lines of sorrow had been softened, the wrinkles strangely smoothed, by the touch of a phantom Master mightier than he.

* Her shrine is at Nara,—not far from the temple of the giant Buddha.

IX. OF SOULS.

KINJURŌ, the ancient gardener, whose head shines like an ivory ball, sat him down a moment on the edge of the ita-no-ma outside my study to smoke his pipe at the hibachi always left there for him. And as he smoked he found occasion to reprove the boy who assists him. What the boy had been doing I did not exactly know; but I heard Kinjurō bid him try to comport himself like a creature having more than one Soul. And because those words interested me I went out and sat down by Kinjurō.

“O Kinjurō,” I said, “whether I myself have one or more Souls I am not sure. But it would much please me to learn how many Souls have you.”

“I-the-Selfish-One have only four Souls,” made answer Kinjurō, with conviction imperturbable.

“Four?” re-echoed I, feeling doubtful of having understood.

“Four,” he repeated. “But that boy I think can have only one Soul, so much is he wanting in patience.”

“And in what manner,” I asked, “came you to learn that you have four Souls?”

“There are wise men,” made he answer, while knocking the ashes out of his little silver pipe, “there

"That is true."

"So that a man of to-day possessing but one Soul may have had an ancestor with nine Souls?"

"Yes."

"Then what has become of those other eight Souls which the ancestor possessed, but which the descendant is without?"

"Ah! that is the work of the gods. The gods alone fix the number of Souls for each of us. To the worthy are many given; to the unworthy few."

"Not from the parents, then, do the Souls descend?"

"Nay! Most ancient the Souls are: innumerable the years of them."

"And this I desire to know: Can a man separate his Souls? Can he, for instance, have one Soul in Kyōto and one in Tōkyō and one in Matsue, all at the same time?"

"He cannot; they remain always together."

"How? One within the other,—like the little lacquered boxes of an inrō?"

"Nay: that none but the gods know."

"And the Souls are never separated?"

"Sometimes they may be separated. But if the Souls of a man be separated, that man becomes mad. Mad people are those who have lost one of their Souls."

"But after death what becomes of the Souls?"

"They remain still together. . . . When a man dies his Souls ascend to the roof of the house. And they stay upon the roof for the space of nine-and-forty days."

"On what part of the roof?"

"On the yane-no-mune,—upon the Ridge of the Roof they stay."

"Can they be seen?"

"Nay: they are like the air is. To and fro upon the Ridge of the Roof they move, like a little wind."

"Why do they not stay upon the roof for fifty days instead of forty-nine?"

"Seven weeks is the time allotted them before they must depart: seven weeks make the measure of forty-nine days. But why this should be, I cannot tell."

I was not unaware of the ancient belief that the spirit of a dead man haunts for a time the roof of his dwelling, because it is referred to quite impressively in many Japanese dramas, among others in the play called *Kagami-yama*, which makes the people weep. But I had not before heard of triplex and quadruplex and other yet more highly complex Souls; and I questioned Kinjurō vainly in the hope of learning the authority for his beliefs. They were the beliefs of his fathers; that was all he knew.*

* Afterwards I found that the old man had expressed to me only one popular form of a belief which would require a large book to fully explain,—a belief founded upon Chinese astrology, but possibly modified by Buddhist and by Shintō ideas. This notion of compound Souls cannot be explained at all without a prior knowledge of the astrological relation between the Chinese Zodiacal Signs and the Ten Celestial Stems. Some understanding of these may be obtained from the curious article "Time," in Professor Chamberlain's admirable little book, *Things Japanese*. The relation having been perceived, it is further necessary to know that under the Chinese astrological system each year is under the influence of one or other of the "Five Elements,"—Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water; and according to the day and year of one's birth, one's temperament is celestially decided. A Japanese mnemonic verse tells us the number of souls or natures corresponding to each of the Five Elemental Influences,—namely, nine souls for Wood, three for Fire, one for Earth, seven for Metal, five for Water:—

Like most Izumo folk, Kinjurō was a Buddhist as well as a Shintōist. As the former he belonged to the Zen-shū, as the latter to the Izumo-Taisha. Yet his ontology seemed to me not of either. Buddhism does not teach the doctrine of compound-multiple Souls. There are old Shintō books inaccessible to the multitude which speak of a doctrine very remotely akin to Kinjurō's; but Kinjurō had never seen them. Those books say that each of us has two souls,—the Ara-tama, or Rough Soul, which is vindictive; and the Nigi-tama,

*Kiku karani
Himitsu no yama ni
Tsuchi hitotsu
Nanatsu kane to zo
Go suryo are.*

Multiplied into ten by being each one divided into "Elder" and "Younger," the Five Elements become the Ten Celestial Stems; and their influences are commingled with those of the Rat, Bull, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Serpent, Horse, Goat, Ape, Cock, Dog, and Boar (the twelve Zodiacal Signs),—all of which have relations to time, place, life, luck, misfortune, &c. But even these hints give no idea whatever how enormously complicated the subject really is.

The book the old gardener referred to—once as widely known in Japan as ever fortune-telling book in any European country—was the *San-ze-sō*, copies of which may still be picked up. Contrary to Kinjurō's opinion, however, it is held, by those learned in such Chinese matters, just as bad to have too many souls as to have too few. To have nine souls is to be too "many-minded,"—without fixed purpose; to have only one soul is to lack quick intelligence. According to the Chinese astrological ideas, the word "natures" or "characters" would perhaps be more accurate than the word "souls" in this case. There is a world of curious fancies, born out of these beliefs. For one example of hundreds, a person having a Fire-nature must not marry one having a Water-nature. Hence the proverbial saying about two who cannot agree,—"They are like Fire and Water."

or Gentle Soul, which is all-forgiving. Furthermore, we are all possessed by the spirit of Oho-maga-tsū-hi-no-Kami, the "Wondrous Deity of Exceeding Great Evils;" also by the spirit of Oho-naho-bi-no-Kami, the "Wondrous Great Rectifying Deity," a counteracting influence. These were not exactly the ideas of Kinjūrō. But I remembered something Hirata wrote which reminded me of Kinjūrō's words about a possible separation of souls. Hirata's teaching was that the *ara-tama* of a man may leave his body, assume his shape, and without his knowledge destroy a hated enemy. So I asked Kinjūrō about it. He said he had never heard of a *nigi-tama* or an *ara-tama*; but he told me this:—

"Master, when a man has been discovered by his wife to be secretly enamoured of another, it sometimes happens that the guilty woman is seized with a sickness that no physician can cure. For one of the Souls of the wife, moved exceedingly by anger, passes into the body of that woman to destroy her. But the wife also sickens, or loses her mind awhile, because of the absence of her Soul.

"And there is another and more wonderful thing known to us of Nippon, which you, being of the West, may never have heard. By the power of the gods, for a righteous purpose, sometimes a Soul may be withdrawn a little while from its body, and be made to utter its most secret thought. But no suffering to the body is then caused. And the wonder is wrought in this wise:—

"A man loves a beautiful girl whom he is at liberty to marry; but he doubts whether he can hope to make her love him in return. He seeks the *kannushi* of a

certain Shintō temple, * and tells of his doubt, and asks the aid of the gods to solve it. Then the priests demand, not his name, but his age and the year and day and hour of his birth, which they write down for the gods to know; and they bid the man return to the temple after the space of seven days.

"And during those seven days the priests offer prayer to the gods that the doubt may be solved; and one of them each morning bathes all his body in cold, pure water, and at each repast eats only food prepared with holy fire. And on the eighth day the man returns to the temple, and enters an inner chamber where the priests receive him.

"A ceremony is performed, and certain prayers are said, after which all wait in silence. And then, the priest who has performed the rites of purification suddenly begins to tremble violently in all his body, like one trembling with a great fever. And this is because, by the power of the gods, the Soul of the girl whose love is doubted has entered, all fearfully, into the body of that priest. She does not know; for at that time, wherever she may be, she is in a deep sleep from which nothing can arouse her. But her Soul, having been summoned into the body of the priest, can speak nothing save the truth; and It is made to tell all Its thought. And the priest speaks not with his own voice, but with the voice of the Soul; and he speaks in the person of the Soul, saying: 'I love,' or 'I hate,' according as the truth may be, and in the language of women. If there

* Usually an Inari temple. Such things are never done at the great Shintō shrines.

be hate, then the reason of the hate is spoken; but if the answer be of love, there is little to say. And then the trembling of the priest stops, for the Soul passes from him; and he falls forward upon his face like one dead, and long so remains."

"Tell me, Kinjurō," I asked, after all these queer things had been related to me, "have you yourself ever known of a Soul being removed by the power of the gods, and placed in the heart of a priest?"

"Yes: I myself have known it."

I remained silent and waited. The old man emptied his little pipe, threw it down beside the hibachi, folded his hands, and looked at the lotus-flowers for some time before he spoke again. Then he smiled and said:—

"Master, I married when I was very young. For many years we had no children: then my wife at last gave me a son, and became a Buddha. But my son lived and grew up handsome and strong; and when the Revolution came, he joined the armies of the Son of Heaven; and he died the death of a man in the great war of the South, in Kyūshū. I loved him; and I wept with joy when I heard that he had been able to die for our Sacred Emperor: since there is no more noble death for the son of a samurai. So they buried my boy far away from me in Kyūshū, upon a hill near Kumamoto, which is a famous city with a strong garrison; and I went there to make his tomb beautiful. But his name is here also, in Ninomaru, graven on the monument to the men of Izumo who fell in the good fight for loyalty and honour in our emperor's holy cause; and when I

see his name there, my heart laughs, and I speak to him, and then it seems as if he were walking beside me again, under the great pines. . . . But all that is another matter.

“I sorrowed for my wife. All the years we had dwelt together, no unkind word had ever been uttered between us. And when she died, I thought never to marry again. But after two more years had passed, my father and mother desired a daughter in the house, and they told me of their wish, and of a girl who was beautiful and of good family, though poor. The family were of our kindred, and the girl was their only support: she wove garments of silk and garments of cotton, and for this she received but little money. And because she was filial and comely, and our kindred not fortunate, my parents desired that I should marry her and help her people; for in those days we had a small income of rice. Then, being accustomed to obey my parents, I suffered them to do what they thought best. So the *nakōdo* was summoned, and the arrangements for the wedding began.

“Twice I was able to see the girl in the house of her parents. And I thought myself fortunate the first time I looked upon her; for she was very comely and young. But the second time, I perceived she had been weeping, and that her eyes avoided mine. Then my heart sank; for I thought: She dislikes me; and they are forcing her to this thing. Then I resolved to question the gods; and I caused the marriage to be delayed; and I went to the temple of *Yanagi-no-Inari-Sama*, which is in the Street *Zaimokuchō*.

“And when the trembling came upon him, the priest,

speaking with the Soul of that maid, declared to me: 'My heart hates you, and the sight of your face gives me sickness, because I love another, and because this marriage is forced upon me. Yet though my heart hates you, I must marry you because my parents are poor and old, and I alone cannot long continue to support them, for my work is killing me. But though I may strive to be a dutiful wife, there never will be gladness in your house because of me; for my heart hates you with a great and lasting hate; and the sound of your voice makes a sickness in my breast (*koe kiite mo mune ga waruku naru*); and only to see your face makes me wish that I were dead (*kao miru to shinjaku naru*).'

"Thus knowing the truth, I told it to my parents; and I wrote a letter of kind words to the maid, praying pardon for the pain I had unknowingly caused her; and I feigned long illness, that the marriage might be broken off without gossip; and we made a gift to that family; and the maid was glad. For she was enabled at a later time to marry the young man she loved. My parents never pressed me again to take a wife; and since their death I have lived alone. . . . O Master, look upon the extreme wickedness of that boy!"

Taking advantage of our conversation, Kinjuro's young assistant had improvised a rod and line with a bamboo stick, and a bit of string; and had fastened to the end of the string a pellet of tobacco stolen from the old man's pouch. With this bait he had been fishing in the lotus pond; and a frog had swallowed it, and was now suspended high above the pebbles, sprawling in rotary

motion, kicking in frantic spasms of disgust and despair. "Kaji!" shouted the gardener.

The boy dropped his rod with a laugh, and ran to us unabashed; while the frog, having disgorged the tobacco, plopped back into the lotus pond. Evidently Kaji was not afraid of scoldings.

"*Goshō ga warui!*" declared the old man, shaking his ivory head. "O Kaji, much I fear that your next birth will be bad! Do I buy tobacco for frogs? Master, said I not rightly this boy has but one Soul?"

X.

OF GHOSTS AND GOBLINS.

I.

THERE was a Buddha, according to the Hokkekyō, who "even assumed the shape of a goblin to preach to such as were to be converted by a goblin." And in the same Sutra may be found this promise of the Teacher: "*While he is dwelling lonely in the wilderness, I will send thither goblins in great number to keep him company.*" The appalling character of this promise is indeed somewhat modified by the assurance that gods also are to be sent. But if ever I become a holy man, I shall take heed not to dwell in the wilderness, because I have seen Japanese goblins, and I do not like them.

Kinjurō showed them to me last night. They had come to town for the matsuri of our own ujigami, or parish-temple; and, as there were many curious things to be seen at the night festival, we started for the temple after dark, Kinjurō carrying a paper lantern painted with my crest.

It had snowed heavily in the morning; but now the sky and the sharp still air were clear as diamond; and the crisp snow made a pleasant crunching sound under our feet as we walked; and it occurred to me to say: "O Kinjurō, is there a God of Snow?"

"I cannot tell," replied Kinjurō. "There be many gods I do not know; and there is not any man who knows the names of all the gods. But there is the Yuki-Onna, the Woman of the Snow."

"And what is the Yuki-Onna?"

"She is the White One that makes the Faces in the snow. She does not any harm, only makes afraid. By day she lifts only her head, and frightens those who journey alone. But at night she rises up sometimes, taller than the trees, and looks about a little while, and then falls back in a shower of snow."*

"What is her face like?"

"It is all white, white. It is an enormous face. And it is a *lonesome* face."

[The word Kinjurō used was *samushii*. Its common meaning is "lonesome;" but he used it, I think, in the sense of "weird."]

"Did you ever see her, Kinjurō?"

"Master, I never saw her. But my father told me that once when he was a child, he wanted to go to a neighbour's house through the snow to play with another little boy; and that on the way he saw a great white Face rise up from the snow and look lonesomely about, so that he cried for fear and ran back. Then his people all went out and looked; but there was only snow; and then they knew that he had seen the Yuki-Onna."

"And in these days, Kinjurō, do people ever see her?"

"Yes. Those who make the pilgrimage to Yabu-

* In other parts of Japan I have heard the Yuki-Onna described as a very beautiful phantom who lures young men to lonesome places for the purpose of sucking their blood.

mura, in the period called Dai-Kan, which is the Time of the Greatest Cold,* they sometimes see her."

"What is there at Yabumura, Kinjurō?"

"There is the Yabu-jinja, which is an ancient and famous temple of Yabu-no-Tenno-San,—the God of Colds, Kaze-no-Kami. It is high upon a hill, nearly nine *ri* from Matsue. And the great matsuri of that temple is held upon the tenth and eleventh days of the Second Month. And on those days strange things may be seen. For one who gets a very bad cold prays to the deity of Yabu-jinja to cure it, and takes a vow to make a pilgrimage naked to the temple at the time of the matsuri."

"Naked?"

"Yes: the pilgrims wear only waraji, and a little cloth round their loins. And a great many men and women go naked through the snow to the temple, though the snow is deep at that time. And each man carries a bunch of gohei and a naked sword as gifts to the temple; and each woman carries a metal mirror. And at the temple, the priests receive them, performing curious rites. For the priests then, according to ancient custom, attire themselves like sick men, and lie down and groan, and drink potions made of herbs, prepared after the Chinese manner."

"But do not some of the pilgrims die of cold, Kinjurō?"

"No: our Izumo peasants are hardy. Besides, they run swiftly, so that they reach the temple all warm. And before returning they put on thick warm robes. But sometimes, upon the way, they see the Yuki-Onna."

* In Izumo the Dai-Kan, or Period of Greatest Cold, falls in February.

II.

Each side of the street leading to the miya was illuminated with a line of paper lanterns bearing holy symbols; and the immense court of the temple had been transformed into a town of booths, and shops, and temporary theatres. In spite of the cold, the crowd was prodigious. There seemed to be all the usual attractions of a matsuri, and a number of unusual ones. Among the familiar lures, I missed at this festival only the maiden wearing an *obi* of living snakes; probably it had become too cold for the snakes. There were several fortune-tellers and jugglers; there were acrobats and dancers; there was a man making pictures out of sand; and there was a menagerie containing an emu from Australia, and a couple of enormous bats from the Loo Choo Islands,—bats trained to do several things. I did reverence to the gods, and bought some extraordinary toys; and then we went to look for the goblins. They were domiciled in a large permanent structure, rented to showmen on special occasions.

Gigantic characters signifying "IKI-NINGYŌ," painted upon the sign-board at the entrance, partly hinted the nature of the exhibition. *Iki-ningyō* ("living images") somewhat correspond to our Occidental "wax figures;" but the equally realistic Japanese creations are made of much cheaper material. Having bought two wooden tickets for one sen each, we entered, and passed behind a curtain to find ourselves in a long corridor lined with booths, or rather matted compartments, about the size

of small rooms. Each space, decorated with scenery appropriate to the subject, was occupied by a group of life-size figures. The group nearest the entrance, representing two men playing samisen and two geisha dancing, seemed to me without excuse for being, until Kinjurō had translated a little placard before it, announcing that one of the figures was a living person. We watched in vain for a wink or palpitation. Suddenly one of the musicians laughed aloud, shook his head, and began to play and sing. The deception was perfect.

The remaining groups, twenty-four in number, were powerfully impressive in their peculiar way, representing mostly famous popular traditions or sacred myths. Feudal heroisms, the memory of which stirs every Japanese heart; legends of filial piety; Buddhist miracles, and stories of emperors were among the subjects. Sometimes, however, the realism was brutal, as in one scene representing the body of a woman lying in a pool of blood, with brains scattered by a sword stroke. Nor was this unpleasantness altogether atoned for by her miraculous resuscitation in the adjoining compartment, where she reappeared returning thanks in a Nichiren temple, and converting her slaughterer, who happened, by some extraordinary accident, to go there at the same time.

At the termination of the corridor there hung a black curtain, behind which screams could be heard. And above the black curtain was a placard inscribed with the promise of a gift to anybody able to traverse the mysteries beyond without being frightened.

“Master,” said Kinjurō, “the goblins are inside.”

We lifted the veil, and found ourselves in a sort of

lane between hedges, and behind the hedges we saw tombs; we were in a graveyard. There were real weeds and trees, and sotoba and haka, and the effect was quite natural. Moreover, as the roof was very lofty, and kept invisible by a clever arrangement of lights, all seemed darkness only; and this gave one a sense of being out under the night, a feeling accentuated by the chill of the air. And here and there we could discern sinister shapes, mostly of superhuman stature, some seeming to wait in dim places, others floating above the graves. Quite near us, towering above the hedge on our right, was a Buddhist priest, with his back turned to us.

"A yamabushi, an exorciser?" I queried of Kinjurō.

"No," said Kinjurō; "see how tall he is. I think that must be a Tanuki-Bōzu."

The Tanuki-Bōzu is the priestly form assumed the goblin-badger (*tanuki*) for the purpose of decimating travellers to destruction. We went on, and up into his face. It was a nightmare,—his face

"In truth a Tanuki-Bōzu," said Kinjurō. does the Master honourably think concerning

Instead of replying, I jumped back; for the thing had suddenly reached over the hedge and at me, with a moan. Then it fell back, still creaking. It was moved by invisible strings.

"I think, Kinjurō, that it is a nasty, hideous thing. But I shall not claim the present."

We laughed, and proceeded to consider the Eyed Friar (*Mitsu-me-Nyūdō*). The Three also watches for the unwary at night. His eyes are smiling as the face of a Buddha, but

hideous eye in the summit of his shaven pate, which can only be seen when seeing it does no good. The Mitsu-me-Nyūdō made a grab at Kinjurō, and startled him almost as much as the Tanuki-Bōzu had startled me.

Then we looked at the Yama-Uba,—the “Mountain Nurse.” She catches little children and nurses them for awhile, and then devours them. In her face she has no mouth; but she has a mouth in the top of her head, under her hair. The Yama-Uba did not clutch at us, because her hands were occupied with a nice little boy, whom she was just going to eat. The child had been made wonderfully pretty to heighten the effect.

Then I saw the spectre of a woman hovering in the air above a tomb at some distance, so that I felt safer in observing it. It had no eyes; its long hair hung stoose; its white robe floated light as smoke. I thought till a statement in a composition by one of my pupils about ghosts: “*Their greatest Peculiarity is that They have no feet.*” Then I jumped again, for the thing, quite soundlessly but very swiftly, made through the air at me.

And the rest of our journey among the graves was little more than a succession of like experiences; but it was made amusing by the screams of women, and bursts of laughter from people who lingered only to watch the effect upon others of what had scared themselves.

III.

Forsaking the goblins, we visited a little open-air theatre to see two girls dance. After they had danced awhile, one girl produced a sword and cut off the other girl’s head, and put it upon a table, where it opened its

mouth and began to sing. All this was very prettily done; but my mind was still haunted by the goblins. So I questioned Kinjurō:—

“Kinjurō, those goblins of which we the ningyō have seen,—do folk believe in the reality thereof?”

“Not any more,” answered Kinjurō,—“not at least among the people of the city. Perhaps in the country it may not be so. We believe in the Lord Buddha; we believe in the ancient gods; and there be many who believe the dead sometimes return to avenge a cruelty or to compel an act of justice. But we do not now believe all that was believed in ancient time. . . . Master,” he added, as we reached another queer exhibition, “it is only one sen to go to hell, if the Master would like to go—”

“Very good, Kinjurō,” I made reply. “Pay two sen that we may both go to hell.”

IV.

And we passed behind a curtain into a big room full of curious clicking and squeaking noises. These noises were made by unseen wheels and pulleys moving a multitude of ningyō upon a broad shelf about breast-high, which surrounded the apartment upon three sides. These ningyō were not iki-ningyō, but very small images,—puppets. They represented all things in the Under-World.

The first I saw was Sozu-Baba, the Old Woman of the River of Ghosts, who takes away the garments of Souls. The garments were hanging upon a tree behind her. She was tall; she rolled her green eyes and gnashed her long teeth, while the shivering of the little white

souls before her was as a trembling of butterflies. Farther on appeared Emma Dai-O, great King of Hell, nodding grimly. At his right hand, upon their tripod, the heads of Kaguhana and Mirume, the Witnesses, whirled as upon a wheel. At his left, a devil was busy sawing a Soul in two; and I noticed that he used his saw like a Japanese carpenter,—pulling it towards him instead of pushing it. And then various exhibitions of the tortures of the damned. A liar bound to a post was having his tongue pulled out by a devil,—slowly, with artistic jerks; it was already longer than the owner's body. Another devil was pounding another Soul in a mortar so vigorously that the sound of the braying could be heard above all the din of the machinery. A little farther on was a man being eaten alive by two serpents having women's faces; one serpent was white, the other blue. The white had been his wife, the blue his concubine. All the tortures known to mediæval Japan were being elsewhere deftly practiced by swarms of devils. After reviewing them, we visited the Sai-no-Kawara, and saw Jizō with a child in his arms, and a circle of other children running swiftly around him, to escape from demons who brandished their clubs and ground their teeth.

Hell proved, however, to be extremely cold; and while meditating on the partial inappropriateness of the atmosphere, it occurred to me that in the common Buddhist picture-books of the Jigoku I had never noticed any illustrations of torment by cold. Indian Buddhism, indeed, teaches the existence of cold hells. There is one, for instance, where people's lips are frozen so that they can say only "Ah-ta-ta!"—wherefore that hell is called Atata. And there is the hell where tongues are

frozen, and where people say only "Ah-baba!" for which reason it is called Ababa. And there is the Pundarika, or Great White-Lotus hell, where the spectacle of the bones laid bare by the cold is "like a blossoming of white lotus-flowers." Kinjurō thinks there are cold hells according to Japanese Buddhism; but he is not sure. And I am not sure that the idea of cold could be made very terrible to the Japanese. They confess a general liking for cold, and compose Chinese poems about the loveliness of ice and snow.

V.

Out of hell, we found our way to a magic-lantern show being given in a larger and even much colder structure. A Japanese magic-lantern show is nearly always interesting in more particulars than one, but perhaps especially as evidencing the native genius for adapting Western inventions to Eastern tastes. A Japanese magic-lantern show is essentially dramatic. It is a play of which the dialogue is uttered by invisible personages, the actors and the scenery being only luminous shadows. Wherefore it is peculiarly well suited to goblinries and weirdnesses of all kinds; and plays in which ghosts figure are the favourite subjects. As the hall was bitterly cold, I waited only long enough to see one performance,—of which the following is an epitome:—

SCENE I.—A beautiful peasant girl and her aged mother, squatting together at home. Mother weeps violently, gesticulates agonisingly. From her frantic speech, broken by wild sobs, we learn that the girl must be sent as a victim to the Kami-Sama of some Jonesome temple

in the mountains. That god is a bad god. Once a year he shoots an arrow into the thatch of some farmer's house as a sign that he wants a girl—to eat! Unless the girl be sent to him at once, he destroys the crops and the cows. Exit mother, weeping and shrieking, and pulling out her grey hair. Exit girl, with downcast head, and air of sweet resignation.

SCENE II.—Before a wayside inn; cherry-trees in blossom. Enter coolies carrying, like a palanquin, a large box, in which the girl is supposed to be. Deposit box; enter to eat; tell story to loquacious landlord. Enter noble samurai, with two swords. Asks about box. Hears the story of the coolies repeated by loquacious landlord. Exhibits fierce indignation; vows that the Kami-Sama are good,—do not eat girls. Declares that so-called Kami-Sama to be a devil. Observes that devils must be killed. Orders box opened. Sends girl home. Gets into box himself, and commands coolies under pain of death to bear him right quickly to that temple.

SCENE III.—Enter coolies, approaching temple through forest at night. Coolies afraid. Drop box and run. Exeunt coolies. Box alone in the dark. Enter veiled figure, all white. Figure moans unpleasantly; utters horrid cries. Box remains impassive. Figure removes veil, showing Its face,—a skull with phosphoric eyes. [*Audience unanimously utter the sound "Aaaaaa!"*] Figure displays Its hands,—monstrous and apish, with claws. [*Audience utter a second "Aaaaaa!"*] Figure approaches the box, touches the box, opens the box!

Up leaps noble samurai. A wrestle; drums sound the roll of battle. Noble samurai practices successfully noble art of jiujutsu. Casts demon down, tramples upon him triumphantly, cuts off his head. Head suddenly enlarges, grows to the size of a house, tries to bite off head of samurai. Samurai slashes it with his sword. Head rolls backward, spitting fire, and vanishes. Finis. *Exeunt omnes.*

VI.

The vision of the samurai and the goblin reminded Kinjurō of a queer tale, which he began to tell me as soon as the shadow-play was over. Ghastly stories are apt to fall flat after such an exhibition; but Kinjurō's stories are always peculiar enough to justify the telling under almost any circumstances. Wherefore I listened eagerly, in spite of the cold:—

“A long time ago, in the days when Fox-women and goblins haunted this land, there came to the capital with her parents a samurai girl, so beautiful that all men who saw her fell enamoured of her. And hundreds of young samurai desired and hoped to marry her, and made their desire known to her parents. For it has ever been the custom in Japan that marriages should be arranged by parents. But there are exceptions to all customs, and the case of this maiden was such an exception. Her parents declared that they intended to allow their daughter to choose her own husband, and that all who wished to win her would be free to woo her.

“Many men of high rank and of great wealth were admitted to the house as suitors; and each one courted

her as he best knew how,—with gifts, and with fair words, and with poems written in her honour, and with promises of eternal love. And to each one she spoke sweetly and hopefully; but she made strange conditions. For every suitor she obliged to bind himself by his word of honour as a samurai to submit to a test of his love for her, and never to divulge to living person what that test might be. And to this all agreed.

“But even the most confident suitors suddenly ceased their importunities after having been put to the test; and all of them appeared to have been greatly terrified by something. Indeed, not a few even fled away from the city, and could not be persuaded by their friends to return. But no one ever so much as hinted why. Therefore it was whispered by those who knew nothing of the mystery, that the beautiful girl must be either a Fox-woman or a goblin.

“Now, when all the wooers of high rank had abandoned their suit, there came a samurai who had no wealth but his sword. He was a good man and true, and of pleasing presence; and the girl seemed to like him. But she made him take the same pledge which the others had taken; and after he had taken it, she told him to return upon a certain evening.

“When that evening came, he was received at the house by none but the girl herself. With her own hands she set before him the repast of hospitality, and waited upon him, after which she told him that she wished him to go out with her at a late hour. To this he consented gladly, and inquired to what place she desired to go. But she replied nothing to his question, and all

at once became very silent, and strange in her manner. And after awhile she retired from the apartment, leaving him alone.

“Only long after midnight she returned, robed all in white,—like a Soul,—and, without uttering a word, signed to him to follow her. Out of the house they hastened while all the city slept. It was what is called an oborozuki-yo—‘moon-clouded night.’ Always upon such a night, ‘tis said, do ghosts wander. She swiftly led the way; and the dogs howled as she flitted by; and she passed beyond the confines of the city to a place of knolls shadowed by enormous trees, where an ancient cemetery was. Into it she glided,—a white shadow into blackness. He followed, wondering, his hand upon his sword. Then his eyes became accustomed to the gloom; and he saw.

“By a new-made grave she paused and signed to him to wait. The tools of the grave-maker were still lying there. Seizing one, she began to dig furiously, with strange haste and strength. At last her spade smote a coffin-lid and made it boom; another moment and the fresh white wood of the kwan was bare. She tore off the lid, revealing a corpse within,—the corpse of a child. With goblin gestures she wrung an arm from the body, wrenched it in twain, and, squatting down, began to devour the upper half. Then, flinging to her lover the other half, she cried to him, ‘*Eat, if thou lovest me! this is what I eat!*’

“Not even for a single instant did he hesitate. He squatted down upon the other side of the grave, and ate the half of the arm, and said, ‘*Kekkō degozari-*

*masu! mo sukoshi chōdai!** For that arm was made of the best kwashi** that Saikyō could produce.

"Then the girl sprang to her feet with a burst of laughter, and cried: 'You only, of all my brave suitors, did not run away! And I wanted a husband who could not fear. I will marry you; I can love you: you are a *man!*'"

VII.

"O Kinjurō," I said, as we took our way home, "I have heard and I have read many Japanese stories of the returning of the dead. Likewise you yourself have told me it is still believed the dead return, and why. But according both to that which I have read and that which you have told me, the coming back of the dead is never a thing to be desired. They return because of hate, or because of envy, or because they cannot rest for sorrow. But of any who return for that which is not evil—where is it written? Surely the common history of them is like that which we have this night seen: much that is horrible and much that is wicked and nothing of that which is beautiful or true."

Now this I said that I might tempt him. And he made even the answer I desired, by uttering the story which is hereafter set down:—

"Long ago, in the days of a daimyō whose name has been forgotten, there lived in this old city a young man and a maid who loved each other very much. Their

* "It is excellent: I pray you give me a little more."

** *Kwashi*: Japanese confectionery.

names are not remembered, but their story remains. From infancy they had been betrothed; and as children they played together, for their parents were neighbours. And as they grew up, they became always fonder of each other.

“Before the youth had become a man, his parents died. But he was able to enter the service of a rich samurai, an officer of high rank, who had been a friend of his people. And his protector soon took him into great favour, seeing him to be courteous, intelligent, and apt at arms. So the young man hoped to find himself shortly in a position that would make it possible for him to marry his betrothed. But war broke out in the north and east; and he was summoned suddenly to follow his master to the field. Before departing, however, he was able to see the girl; and they exchanged pledges in the presence of her parents; and he promised, should he remain alive, to return within a year from that day to marry his betrothed.

“After his going much time passed without news of him, for there was no post in that time as now; and the girl grieved so much for thinking of the chances of war that she became all white and thin and weak. Then at last she heard of him through a messenger sent from the army to bear news to the daimyō, and once again a letter was brought to her by another messenger. And thereafter there came no word. Long is a year to one who waits. And the year passed, and he did not return.

“Other seasons passed, and still he did not come; and she thought him dead; and she sickened and lay down, and died, and was buried. Then her old parents, who had no other child, grieved unspeakably, and came

to hate their home for the lonesomeness of it. After a time they resolved to sell all they had, and to set out upon a sengaji,—the great pilgrimage to the Thousand Temples of the Nichiren-Shū, which requires many years to perform. So they sold their small house with all that it contained, excepting the ancestral tablets, and the holy things which must never be sold, and the *ihai* of their buried daughter, which were placed, according to the custom of those about to leave their native place, in the family temple. Now the family was of the Nichiren-Shū; and their temple was *Myōkōji*.

“They had been gone only four days when the young man who had been betrothed to their daughter returned to the city. He had attempted, with the permission of his master, to fulfill his promise. But the provinces upon his way were full of war, and the roads and passes were guarded by troops, and he had been long delayed by many difficulties. And when he heard of his misfortune he sickened for grief, and many days remained without knowledge of anything, like one about to die.

“But when he began to recover his strength, all the pain of memory came back again; and he regretted that he had not died. Then he resolved to kill himself upon the grave of his betrothed; and, as soon as he was able to go out unobserved, he took his sword and went to the cemetery where the girl was buried: it is a lonesome place,—the cemetery of *Myōkōji*. There he found her tomb, and knelt before it, and prayed and wept, and whispered to her that which he was about to do. And suddenly he heard her voice cry to him: ‘*Anata!*’ and felt her hand upon his hand; and he turned, and saw

her kneeling beside him, smiling, and beautiful as he remembered her, only a little pale. Then his heart leaped so that he could not speak for the wonder and the doubt and the joy of that moment. But she said: 'Do not doubt: it is really I. I am not dead. It was all a mistake. I was buried, because my people thought me dead,—buried too soon. And my own parents thought me dead, and went upon a pilgrimage. Yet you see I am not dead,—not a ghost. It is I: do not doubt it! And I have seen your heart, and that was worth all the waiting and the pain. . . . But now let us go away at once to another city, so that people may not know this thing and trouble us; for all still believe me dead.'

"And they went away, no one observing them. And they went even to the village of Minobu, which is in the province of Kai. For there is a famous temple of the Nichiren-Shū in that place; and the girl had said: 'I know that in the course of their pilgrimage my parents will surely visit Minobu: so that if we dwell there, they will find us, and we shall be all again together.' And when they came to Minobu, she said: 'Let us open a little shop.' And they opened a little food-shop, on the wide way leading to the holy place; and there they sold cakes for children, and toys, and food for pilgrims. For two years they so lived and prospered; and there was a son born to them.

"Now when the child was a year and two months old, the parents of the wife came in the course of their pilgrimage to Minobu; and they stopped at the little shop to buy food. And seeing their daughter's betrothed, they cried out and wept and asked questions.

Then he made them enter, and bowed down before them, and astonished them, saying: 'Truly as I speak it, your daughter is not dead; and she is my wife; and we have a son. And she is even now within the farther room, lying down with the child. I pray you go in at once and gladden her, for her heart longs for the moment of seeing you again.'

"So while he busied himself in making all things ready for their comfort, they entered the inner room very softly,—the mother first.

"They found the child asleep; but the mother they did not find. She seemed to have gone out for a little while only: her pillow was still warm. They waited long for her: then they began to seek her. But never was she seen again.

"And they understood only when they found, beneath the coverings which had covered the mother and child, something which they remembered having left years before in the temple of Myōkōji,—a little mortuary tablet,—the *ihai* of their buried daughter."

I suppose I must have looked thoughtful after this tale; for the old man said:—

"Perhaps the Master honourably thinks concerning the story that it is foolish?"

"Nay, Kinjurō, the story is in my heart."

XI.

THE JAPANESE SMILE.

I.

THOSE whose ideas of the world and its wonders have been formed chiefly by novels and romance still indulge a vague belief that the East is more serious than the West. Those who judge things from a higher standpoint argue, on the contrary, that, under present conditions, the West must be more serious than the East; and also that gravity, or even something resembling its converse, may exist only as a fashion. But the fact is that in this, as in all other questions, no rule susceptible of application to either half of humanity can be accurately framed. Scientifically, we can do no more just now than study certain contrasts in a general way, without hoping to explain satisfactorily the highly complex causes which produced them. One such contrast, of particular interest, is that afforded by the English and the Japanese.

It is a commonplace to say that the English are a serious people,—not superficially serious, but serious all the way down to the bed-rock of the race character. It is almost equally safe to say that the Japanese are not very serious, either above or below the surface, even as compared with races much less serious than our own.

And in the same proportion, at least, that they are less serious, they are more happy: they still, perhaps, remain the happiest people in the civilised world. We serious folk of the West cannot call ourselves very happy. Indeed, we do not yet fully know how serious we are; and it would probably frighten us to learn how much more serious we are likely to become under the ever-swelling pressure of industrial life. It is, possibly, by long sojourn among a people less gravely disposed that we can best learn our own temperament. This conviction came to me very strongly when, after having lived for nearly three years in the interior of Japan, I returned to English life for a few days at the open port of Kobe. To hear English once more spoken by Englishmen touched me more than I could have believed possible; but this feeling lasted only for a moment. My object was to make some necessary purchases. Accompanying me was a Japanese friend, to whom all that foreign life was utterly new and wonderful, and who asked me this curious question: "Why is it that the foreigners never smile? You smile and bow when you speak to them; but they never smile. Why?"

The fact was, I had fallen altogether into Japanese habits and ways, and had got out of touch with Western life; and my companion's question first made me aware that I had been acting somewhat curiously. It also seemed to me a fair illustration of the difficulty of mutual comprehension between the two races,—each quite naturally, though quite erroneously, estimating the manners and motives of the other by its own. If the Japanese are puzzled by English gravity, the English are, to say the least, equally puzzled by Japanese levity.

The Japanese speak of the "angry faces" of the foreigners. The foreigners speak with strong contempt of the Japanese smile: they suspect it to signify insincerity; indeed, some declare it cannot possibly signify anything else. Only a few of the more observant have recognised it as an enigma worth studying. One of my Yokohama friends—a thoroughly lovable man, who had passed more than half his life in the open ports of the East—said to me, just before my departure for the interior: "Since you are going to study Japanese life, perhaps you will be able to find out something for me. I *can't* understand the Japanese smile. Let me tell you one experience out of many. One day, as I was driving down from the Bluff, I saw an empty kuruma coming up on the wrong side of the curve. I could not have pulled up in time if I had tried; but I didn't try, because I didn't think there was any particular danger. I only yelled to the man in Japanese to get to the other side of the road; instead of which he simply backed his kuruma against a wall on the lower side of the curve, with the shafts outwards. At the rate I was going, there wasn't room even to swerve; and the next minute one of the shafts of that kuruma was in my horse's shoulder. The man wasn't hurt at all. When I saw the way my horse was bleeding, I quite lost my temper, and struck the man over the head with the butt of my whip. He looked right into my face and smiled, and then bowed. I can see that smile now. I felt as if I had been knocked down. The smile utterly nonplussed me,—killed all my anger instantly. Mind you, it was a polite smile. But what did it mean? Why the devil did the man smile? I *can't* understand it."

Neither, at that time, could I; but the meaning of much more mysterious smiles has since been revealed to me. A Japanese can smile in the teeth of death, and usually does. But he then smiles for the same reason that he smiles at other times. There is neither defiance nor hypocrisy in the smile; nor is it to be confounded with that smile of sickly resignation which we are apt to associate with weakness of character. It is an elaborate and long-cultivated etiquette. It is also a silent language. But any effort to interpret it according to Western notions of physiognomical expression would be just about as successful as an attempt to interpret Chinese ideo-graphs by their real or fancied resemblance to shapes of familiar things.

First impressions, being largely instinctive, are scientifically recognised as partly trustworthy; and the very first impression produced by the Japanese smile is not far from the truth. The stranger cannot fail to notice the generally happy and smiling character of the native faces; and this first impression is, in most cases, wonderfully pleasant. The Japanese smile at first charms. It is only at a later day, when one has observed the same smile under extraordinary circumstances,—in moments of pain, shame, disappointment,—that one becomes suspicious of it. Its apparent inopportuneness may even, on certain occasions, cause violent anger. Indeed, many of the difficulties between foreign residents and their native servants have been due to the smile. Any man who believes in the British tradition that a good servant must be solemn is not likely to endure with patience the smile of his “boy.” At present, however, this particular phase of Western eccentricity is becoming more fully re-

cognised by the Japanese; they are beginning to learn that the average English-speaking foreigner hates smiling, and is apt to consider it insulting; wherefore Japanese employees at the open ports have generally ceased to smile, and have assumed an air of sullenness.

At this moment there comes to me the recollection of a queer story told by a lady of Yokohama about one of her Japanese servants. "My Japanese nurse came to me the other day, smiling as if something very pleasant had happened, and said that her husband was dead, and that she wanted permission to attend his funeral. I told her she could go. It seems they burned the man's body. Well, in the evening she returned, and showed me a vase containing some ashes of bones (I saw a tooth among them); and she said: 'That is my husband.' And she actually *laughed* as she said it! Did you ever hear of such disgusting creatures?"

It would have been quite impossible to convince the narrator of this incident that the demeanour of her servant, instead of being heartless, might have been heroic, and capable of a very touching interpretation. Even one not a Philistine might be deceived in such a case by appearances. But quite a number of the foreign residents of the open ports are pure Philistines, and never try to look below the surface of the life around them, except as hostile critics. My Yokohama friend who told me the story about the kurumaya was quite differently disposed: he recognised the error of judging by appearances.

II.

Miscomprehension of the Japanese smile has more than once led to extremely unpleasant results, as happened in the case of T——, a Yokohama merchant of former days. T—— had employed in some capacity (I think partly as a teacher of Japanese) a nice old samurai, who wore, according to the fashion of the era, a queue and two swords. The English and the Japanese do not understand each other very well now; but at the period in question they understood each other much less. The Japanese servants at first acted in foreign employ precisely as they would have acted in the service of distinguished Japanese;* and this innocent mistake pro-

* The reader will find it well worth his while to consult the chapter entitled "Domestic Service," in Miss Bacon's *Japanese Girls and Women*, for an interesting and just presentation of the practical side of the subject, as relating to servants of both sexes. The poetical side, however, is not treated of,--perhaps because intimately connected with religious beliefs which one writing from the Christian standpoint could not be expected to consider sympathetically. Domestic service in ancient Japan was both transfigured and regulated by religion; and the force of the religious sentiment concerning it may be divined from the Buddhist saying, still current:—

*Oya-ko wa is-se,
Fūfu wa ni-se,
Shujū wa san-se.*

The relation of parent and child endures for the space of one life only; that of husband and wife for the space of two lives; but the relation between master and servant continues for the period of three existences.

voked a good deal of abuse and cruelty. Finally the discovery was made that to treat Japanese like West Indian negroes might be very dangerous. A certain number of foreigners were killed, with good moral consequences.

But I am digressing. T—— was rather pleased with his old samurai, though quite unable to understand his Oriental politeness, his prostrations, or the meaning of the small gifts which he presented occasionally, with an exquisite courtesy entirely wasted upon T——. One day he came to ask a favour. (I think it was the eve of the Japanese New Year, when everybody needs money, for reasons not here to be dwelt upon.) The favour was that T—— would lend him a little money upon one of his swords, the long one. It was a very beautiful weapon, and the merchant saw that it was also very valuable, and lent the money without hesitation. Some weeks later the old man was able to redeem his sword.

What caused the beginning of the subsequent unpleasantness nobody now remembers. Perhaps T——'s nerves got out of order. At all events, one day he became very angry with the old man, who submitted to the expression of his wrath with bows and smiles. This made him still more angry, and he used some extremely bad language; but the old man still bowed and smiled; wherefore he was ordered to leave the house. But the old man continued to smile, at which T——, losing all self-control, struck him. And then T—— suddenly became afraid, for the long sword instantly leaped from its sheath, and swirled above him; and the old man ceased to seem old. Now, in the grasp of anyone who knows how to use it, the razor-edged blade of a Japanese

sword wielded with both hands can take a head off with extreme facility. But, to T——'s astonishment, the old samurai, almost in the same moment, returned the blade to its sheath with the skill of a practiced swordsman, turned upon his heel, and withdrew.

Then T—— wondered, and sat down to think. He began to remember some nice things about the old man, —the many kindnesses unasked and unpaid, the curious little gifts, the impeccable honesty. T—— began to feel ashamed. He tried to console himself with the thought: "Well, it was his own fault; he had no right to laugh at me when he knew I was angry." Indeed, T—— even resolved to make amends when an opportunity should offer.

But no opportunity ever came, because on the same evening the old man performed *hara-kiri*, after the manner of a samurai. He left a very beautifully written letter explaining his reasons. For a samurai to receive an unjust blow without avenging it was a shame not to be borne. He had received such a blow. Under any other circumstances he might have avenged it. But the circumstances were, in this instance, of a very peculiar kind. His code of honour forbade him to use his sword upon the man to whom he had pledged it once for money, in an hour of need. And being thus unable to use his sword, there remained for him only the alternative of an honourable suicide.

In order to render this story less disagreeable, the reader may suppose that T—— was really very sorry, and behaved generously to the family of the old man. What he must not suppose is that T—— was ever able

to imagine why the old man had smiled the smile which led to the outrage and the tragedy.

III.

To comprehend the Japanese smile, one must be able to enter a little into the ancient, natural, and popular life of Japan. From the modernised upper classes nothing is to be learned. The deeper signification of race differences is being daily more and more illustrated in the effects of the higher education. Instead of creating any community of feeling, it appears only to widen the distance between the Occidental and the Oriental. Some foreign observers have declared that it does this by enormously developing certain latent peculiarities,—among others an inherent materialism little perceptible among the common people. This explanation is one I cannot quite agree with; but it is at least undeniable that, the more highly he is cultivated, according to Western methods, the farther is the Japanese psychologically removed from us. Under the new education, his character seems to crystallise into something of singular hardness, and the Western observation, at least, of singular opacity. Emotionally, the Japanese child appears incomparably closer to us than the Japanese mathematician, the peasant than the statesman. Between the most elevated class of thoroughly modernised Japanese and the Western thinker anything akin to intellectual sympathy is non-existent: it is replaced on the native side by a cold and faultless politeness. Those influences which in other lands appear most potent to develop the

higher emotions seem here to have the extraordinary effect of suppressing them. We are accustomed abroad to associate emotional sensibility with intellectual expansion: it would be a grievous error to apply this rule in Japan. Even the foreign teacher in an ordinary school can feel, year by year, his pupils drifting farther away from him, as they pass from class to class; in various higher educational institutions, the separation widens yet more rapidly, so that, prior to graduation, students may become to their professor little more than casual acquaintances. The enigma is perhaps, to some extent, a physiological one, requiring scientific explanation; but its solution must first be sought in ancestral habits of life and of imagination. It can be fully discussed only when its natural causes are understood; and these, we may be sure, are not simple. By some observers it is asserted that because the higher education in Japan has not yet had the effect of stimulating the higher emotions to the Occidental pitch, its developing power cannot have been exerted uniformly and wisely, but in special directions only, at the cost of character. Yet this theory involves the unwarrantable assumption that character can be created by education; and it ignores the fact that the best results are obtained by affording opportunity for the exercise of pre-existing inclination rather than by any system of teaching.

The causes of the phenomenon must be looked for in the race character; and whatever the higher education may accomplish in the remote future, it can scarcely be expected to transform nature. But does it at present atrophy certain finer tendencies? I think that it unavoidably does, for the simple reason that, under exist-

ing conditions, the moral and mental powers are over-tasked by its requirements. All that wonderful national spirit of duty, of patience, of self-sacrifice, anciently directed to social, moral, or religious idealism, must, under the discipline of the higher training, be concentrated upon an end which not only demands, but exhausts its fullest exercise. For that end, to be accomplished at all, must be accomplished in the face of difficulties that the Western student rarely encounters, and could scarcely be made even to understand. All those moral qualities which made the old Japanese character admirable are certainly the same which make the modern Japanese student the most indefatigable, the most docile, the most ambitious in the world. But they are also qualities which urge him to efforts in excess of his natural powers, with the frequent result of mental and moral enervation. The nation has entered upon a period of intellectual overstrain. Consciously or unconsciously, in obedience to sudden necessity, Japan has undertaken nothing less than the tremendous task of forcing mental expansion up to the highest existing standard; and this means forcing the development of the nervous system. For the desired intellectual change, to be accomplished within a few generations, must involve a physiological change never to be effected without terrible cost. In other words, Japan has attempted too much; yet under the circumstances she could not have attempted less. Happily, even among the poorest of her poor the educational policy of the government is seconded with an astonishing zeal; the entire nation has plunged into study with a fervour of which it is utterly impossible to convey any adequate conception in this

little essay. Yet I may cite a touching example. Immediately after the frightful earthquake of 1891, the children of the ruined cities of Gifu and Aichi, crouching among the ashes of their homes, cold and hungry and shelterless, surrounded by horror and misery unspeakable, still continued their small studies, using tiles of their own burnt dwellings in lieu of slates, and bits of line for chalk, even while the earth still trembled beneath them.* What future miracles may justly be expected from the amazing power of purpose such a fact reveals!

But it is true that as yet the results of the higher training have not been altogether happy. Among the Japanese of the old *régime* one encounters a courtesy, an unselfishness, a grace of pure goodness, impossible to overpraise. Among the modernised of the new generation these have almost disappeared. One meets a class of young men who ridicule the old times and the old ways without having been able to elevate themselves above the vulgarism of imitation and the commonplaces of shallow scepticism. What has become of the noble and charming qualities they must have inherited from their fathers? Is it not possible that the best of those qualities have been transmuted into mere effort,—an effort so excessive as to have exhausted character, leaving it without weight or balance?

It is to the still fluid, mobile, natural existence of the common people that one must look for the mean-

* The shocks continued, though with lessening frequency and violence, for more than six months after the cataclysm.

ing of some apparent differences in the race feeling and emotional expression of the West and the Far East. With those gentle, kindly, sweet-hearted folk, who smile at life, love, and death alike, it is possible to enjoy community of feeling in simple, natural things; and by familiarity and sympathy we can learn why they smile.

The Japanese child is born with this happy tendency, which is fostered through all the period of home education. But it is cultivated with the same exquisite-ness that is shown in the cultivation of the natural tendencies of a garden plant. The smile is taught like the bow; like the prostration; like that little sibilant sucking-in of the breath which follows, as a token of pleasure, the salutation to a superior; like all the elaborate and beautiful etiquette of the old courtesy. Laughter is not encouraged, for obvious reasons. But the smile is to be used upon all pleasant occasions, when speaking to a superior or to an equal, and even upon occasions which are not pleasant; it is a part of deport-ment. The most agreeable face is the smiling face; and to present always the most agreeable face possible to parents, relatives, teachers, friends, well-wishers, is a rule of life. And furthermore, it is a rule of life to turn constantly to the outer world a mien of happiness, to convey to others as far as possible a pleasant im-pression. Even though the heart is breaking, it is a social duty to smile bravely. On the other hand, to look serious or unhappy is rude, because this may cause anxiety or pain to those who love us; it is like-wise foolish, since it may excite unkindly curiosity on the part of those who love us not. Cultivated from

childhood as a duty, the smile soon becomes instinctive. In the mind of the poorest peasant lives the conviction that to exhibit the expression of one's personal sorrow or pain or anger is rarely useful, and always unkind. Hence, although natural grief must have, in Japan as elsewhere, its natural issue, an uncontrollable burst of tears in the presence of superiors or guests is an impoliteness; and the first words of even the most unlettered countrywoman, after the nerves give way in such a circumstance, are invariably: "Pardon my selfishness in that I have been so rude!" The reasons for the smile, be it also observed, are not only moral; they are to some extent æsthetic; they partly represent the same idea which regulated the expression of suffering in Greek art. But they are much more moral than æsthetic, as we shall presently observe.

From this primary etiquette of the smile there has been developed a secondary etiquette, the observance of which has frequently impelled foreigners to form the most cruel misjudgments as to Japanese sensibility. It is the native custom that whenever a painful or shocking fact *must* be told, the announcement should be made, by the sufferer, with a smile.* The graver the subject, the more accentuated the smile; and when the matter is very unpleasant to the person speaking of it, the smile often changes to a low, soft laugh. However bitterly the mother who has lost her first-born may have wept at the funeral, it is probable that, if in your service, she will tell of her bereavement with a smile:

* Of course the converse is the rule in condoling with the sufferer.

like the Preacher, she holds that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh. It was long before I myself could understand how it was possible for those whom I believed to have loved a person recently dead to announce to me that death with a laugh. Yet the laugh was politeness carried to the utmost point of self-abnegation. It signified: "This you might honourably think to be an unhappy event; pray do not suffer Your Superiority to feel concern about so inferior a matter, and pardon the necessity which causes us to outrage politeness by speaking about such an affair at all."

The key to the mystery of the most unaccountable smiles is Japanese politeness. The servant sentenced to dismissal for a fault prostrates himself, and asks for pardon with a smile. That smile indicates the very reverse of callousness or insolence: "Be assured that I am satisfied with the great justice of your honourable sentence, and that I am now aware of the gravity of my fault. Yet my sorrow and my necessity have caused me to indulge the unreasonable hope that I may be forgiven for my great rudeness in asking pardon." The youth or girl beyond the age of childish tears, when punished for some error, receives the punishment with a smile which means: "No evil feeling arises in my heart; much worse than this my fault has deserved." And the kurumaya cut by the whip of my Yokohama friend smiled for a similar reason, as my friend must have intuitively felt, since the smile at once disarmed him: "I was very wrong, and you are right to be angry: I deserve to be struck, and therefore feel no resentment."

But it should be understood that the poorest and

humblest Japanese is rarely submissive under injustice. His apparent docility is due chiefly to his moral sense. The foreigner who strikes a native for sport may have reason to find that he has made a serious mistake. The Japanese are not to be trifled with; and brutal attempts to trifle with them have cost several worthless lives.

Even after the foregoing explanations, the incident of the Japanese nurse may still seem incomprehensible; but this, I feel quite sure, is because the narrator either suppressed or overlooked certain facts in the case. In the first half of the story, all is perfectly clear. When announcing her husband's death, the young servant smiled, in accordance with the native formality already referred to. What is quite incredible is that, of her own accord, she should have invited the attention of her mistress to the contents of the vase, or funeral urn. If she knew enough of Japanese politeness to smile in announcing her husband's death, she must certainly have known enough to prevent her from perpetrating such an error. She could have shown the vase and its contents only in obedience to some real or fancied command; and when so doing, it is more than possible she may have uttered the low, soft laugh which accompanies either the unavoidable performance of a painful duty, or the enforced utterance of a painful statement. My own opinion is that she was obliged to gratify a wanton curiosity. Her smile or laugh would then have signified: "Do not suffer your honourable feelings to be shocked upon my unworthy account; it is indeed very rude of me, even at your honourable request, to mention so contemptible a thing as my sorrow."

IV.

But the Japanese smile must not be imagined as a kind of *sourire figé*, worn perpetually as a soul-mask. Like other matters of deportment, it is regulated by an etiquette which varies in different classes of society. As a rule, the old samurai were not given to smiling upon all occasions; they reserved their amiability for superiors and intimates, and would seem to have maintained toward inferiors an austere reserve. The dignity of the Shintō priesthood has become proverbial; and for centuries the gravity of the Confucian code was mirrored in the decorum of magistrates and officials. From ancient times the nobility affected a still loftier reserve; and the solemnity of rank deepened through all the hierarchies up to that awful state surrounding the Tenshi-Sama, upon whose face no living man might look. But in private life the demeanour of the highest had its amiable relaxation; and even to-day, with some hopelessly modernised exceptions, the noble, the judge, the high priest, the august minister, the military officer, will resume at home, in the intervals of duty, the charming habits of the antique courtesy.

The smile which illuminates conversation is in itself but a small detail of that courtesy; but the sentiment which it symbolises certainly comprises the larger part. If you happen to have a cultivated Japanese friend who has remained in all things truly Japanese, whose character has remained untouched by the new egotism and by foreign influences, you will probably be able to study

in him the particular social traits of the whole people,—traits in his case exquisitely accentuated and polished. You will observe that, as a rule, he never speaks of himself, and that, in reply to searching personal questions, he will answer as vaguely and briefly as possible, with a polite bow of thanks. But, on the other hand, he will ask many questions about yourself: your opinions, your ideas, even trifling details of your daily life, appear to have deep interest for him; and you will probably have occasion to note that he never forgets anything which he has learned concerning you. Yet there are certain rigid limits to his kindly curiosity, and perhaps even to his observation: he will never refer to any disagreeable or painful matter, and he will seem to remain blind to eccentricities or small weaknesses, if you have any. To your face he will never praise you; but he will never laugh at you nor criticise you. Indeed, you will find that he never criticises persons, but only actions in their results. As a private adviser, he will not even directly criticise a plan of which he disapproves, but is apt to suggest a new one in some such guarded language as: "Perhaps it might be more to your immediate interest to do thus and so." When obliged to speak of others, he will refer to them in a curious indirect fashion, by citing and combining a number of incidents sufficiently characteristic to form a picture. But in that event the incidents narrated will almost certainly be of a nature to awaken interest, and to create a favourable impression. This indirect way of conveying information is essentially Confucian. "Even when you have no doubts," says the Li-Ki, "do not let what you say appear as your own view." And it is quite probable that

you will notice many other traits in your friend requiring some knowledge of the Chinese classics to understand. But no such knowledge is necessary to convince you of his exquisite consideration for others, and his studied suppression of self. Among no other civilised people is the secret of happy living so thoroughly comprehended as among the Japanese; by no other race is the truth so widely understood that our pleasure in life must depend upon the happiness of those about us, and consequently upon the cultivation in ourselves of unselfishness and of patience. For which reason, in Japanese society, sarcasm, irony, cruel wit, are not indulged. I might almost say that they have no existence in refined life. A personal failing is not made the subject of ridicule or reproach; an eccentricity is not commented upon; an involuntary mistake excites no laughter.

Stiffened somewhat by the Chinese conservatism of the old conditions, it is true that this ethical system was maintained to the extreme of giving fixity to ideas, and at the cost of individuality. And yet, if regulated by a broader comprehension of social requirements, if expanded by scientific understanding of the freedom essential to intellectual evolution, the very same moral policy is that through which the highest and happiest results may be obtained. But as actually practiced it was not favourable to originality; it rather tended to enforce that amiable mediocrity of opinion and imagination which still prevails. Wherefore a foreign dweller in the interior cannot but long sometimes for the sharp, erratic inequalities of Western life, with its larger joys and pains and its more comprehensive sympathies. But sometimes only, for the intellectual loss is really more

than compensated by the social charm; and there can remain no doubt in the mind of one who even partly understands the Japanese, that they are still the best people in the world to live among.

V.

As I pen these lines, there returns to me the vision of a Kyōto night. While passing through some wonderfully thronged and illuminated street, of which I cannot remember the name, I had turned aside to look at a statue of Jizō, before the entrance of a very small temple. The figure was that of a kozō, an acolyte,—a beautiful boy; and its smile was a bit of divine realism. As I stood gazing, a young lad, perhaps ten years old, ran up beside me, joined his little hands before the image, bowed his head, and prayed for a moment in silence. He had but just left some comrades, and the joy and glow of play were still upon his face; and his unconscious smile was so strangely like the smile of the child of stone that the boy seemed the twin brother of the god. And then I thought: "The smile of bronze or stone is not a copy only; but that which the Buddhist sculptor symbolises thereby must be the explanation of the smile of the race."

That was long ago; but the idea which then suggested itself still seems to me true. However foreign to Japanese soil the origin of Buddhist art, yet the smile of the people signifies the same conception as the smile of the Bosatsu,—the happiness that is born of self-control and self-suppression. "If a man conquer in battle

a thousand times a thousand, and another conquer himself, he who conquers himself is the greatest of conquerors." "Not even a god can change into defeat the victory of the man who has vanquished himself."* Such Buddhist texts as these—and they are many—assuredly express, though they cannot be assumed to have created, those moral tendencies which form the highest charm of the Japanese character. And the whole moral idealism of the race seems to me to have been imaged in that marvellous Buddha of Kamakura, whose countenance, "calm like a deep, still water,"** expresses, as perhaps no other work of human hands can have expressed, the eternal truth: "There is no higher happiness than rest."*** It is toward that infinite calm that the aspirations of the Orient have been turned; and the ideal of the Supreme Self-Conquest it has made its own. Even now, though agitated at its surface by those new influences which must sooner or later move it even to its uttermost depths, the Japanese mind retains, as compared with the thought of the West, a wonderful placidity. It dwells but little, if at all, upon those ultimate abstract questions about which we most concern ourselves. Neither does it comprehend our interest in them as we desire to be comprehended. "That you should not be indifferent to religious speculations," a Japanese scholar once observed to me, "is quite natural; but it is equally natural that we should never trouble ourselves about them. The philosophy of Buddhism has a profundity far exceeding that of your Western theology, and we have studied it. We have sounded the depths of speculation only to find

* Dhammapada. ** Dammikkasutta. *** Dhammapada.

that there are depths unfathomable below those depths; we have voyaged to the farthest limit that thought may sail, only to find that the horizon forever recedes. And you, you have remained for many thousand years as children playing in a stream, but ignorant of the sea. Only now you have reached its shore by another path than ours, and the vastness is for you a new wonder; and you would sail to Nowhere because you have seen the infinite over the sands of life."

Will Japan be able to assimilate Western civilisation, as she did Chinese more than ten centuries ago, and nevertheless preserve her own peculiar modes of thought and feeling? One striking fact is hopeful: that the Japanese admiration for Western material superiority is by no means extended to Western morals. Oriental thinkers do not commit the serious blunder of confounding mechanical with ethical progress, nor have they failed to perceive the moral weaknesses of our boasted civilisation. One Japanese writer has expressed his judgment of things Occidental after a fashion that deserves to be noticed by a larger circle of readers than that for which it was originally written:—

"Order or disorder in a nation does not depend upon something that falls from the sky or rises from the earth. It is determined by the disposition of the people. The pivot on which the public disposition turns towards order or disorder is the point where public and private motives separate. If the people be influenced chiefly by public considerations, order is assured; if by private, disorder is inevitable. Public considerations are those that prompt the proper observance of duties; their

prevalence signifies peace and prosperity in the case alike of families, communities, and nations. Private considerations are those suggested by selfish motives: when they prevail, disturbance and disorder are unavoidable. As members of a family, our duty is to look after the welfare of that family; as units of a nation, our duty is to work for the good of the nation. To regard our family affairs with all the interest due to our family, and our national affairs with all the interest due to our nation,—this is to fitly discharge our duty, and to be guided by public considerations. On the other hand, to regard the affairs of the nation as if they were our own family affairs,—this is to be influenced by private motives and to stray from the path of duty. . . .

“Selfishness is born in every man; to indulge it freely is to become a beast. Therefore it is that sages preach the principles of duty and propriety, justice and morality, providing restraints for private aims and encouragements for public spirit. . . . What we know of Western civilisation is that it struggled on through long centuries in a confused condition, and finally attained a state of some order; but that even this order, not being based upon such principles as those of the natural and immutable distinctions between sovereign and subject, parent and child, with all their corresponding rights and duties, is liable to constant change, according to the growth of human ambitions and human aims. Admirably suited to persons whose actions are controlled by selfish ambition, the adoption of this system in Japan is naturally sought by a certain class of politicians. From a superficial point of view, the Occidental form of society is very attractive, inasmuch as, being the outcome of a

free development of human desires from ancient times, it represents the very extreme of luxury and extravagance. Briefly speaking, the state of things obtaining in the West is based upon the free play of human selfishness, and can only be reached by giving full sway to that quality. Social disturbances are little heeded in the Occident; yet they are at once the evidences and the factors of the present evil state of affairs. . . . Do Japanese enamoured of Western ways propose to have their nation's history written in similar terms? Do they seriously contemplate turning their country into a new field for experiments in Western civilisation? . . .

"In the Orient, from ancient times, national government has been based on benevolence, and directed to securing the welfare and happiness of the people. No political creed has ever held that intellectual strength should be cultivated for the purpose of exploiting inferiority and ignorance. . . . The inhabitants of this empire live, for the most part, by manual labour. Let them be never so industrious, they hardly earn enough to supply their daily wants. They earn on the average about twenty sen daily. There is no question with them of aspiring to wear fine clothes or to inhabit handsome houses. Neither can they hope to reach positions of fame and honour. What offence have these poor people committed that they, too, should not share the benefits of Western civilisation? . . . By some, indeed, their condition is explained on the hypothesis that their desires do not prompt them to better themselves. There is no truth in such a supposition. They have desires, but nature has limited their capacity to satisfy them; their duty as men limits it, and the amount of labour

physically possible to a human being limits it. They achieve as much as their opportunities permit. The best and finest products of their labour they reserve for the wealthy; the worst and roughest they keep for their own use. Yet there is nothing in human society that does not owe its existence to labour. Now, to satisfy the desires of one luxurious man, the toil of a thousand is needed. Surely it is monstrous that those who owe to labour the pleasures suggested by their civilisation should forget what they owe to the labourer, and treat him as if he were not a fellow-being. But civilisation, according to the interpretation of the Occident, serves only to satisfy men of large desires. It is of no benefit to the masses, but is simply a system under which ambitions compete to accomplish their aims. . . . That the Occidental system is gravely disturbing to the order and peace of a country is seen by men who have eyes, and heard by men who have ears. The future of Japan under such a system fills us with anxiety. A system based on the principle that ethics and religion are made to serve human ambition naturally accords with the wishes of selfish individuals; and such theories as those embodied in the modern formula of liberty and equality annihilate the established relations of society, and outrage decorum and propriety. . . . Absolute equality and absolute liberty being unattainable, the limits prescribed by right and duty are supposed to be set. But as each person seeks to have as much right and to be burdened with as little duty as possible, the results are endless disputes and legal contentions. The principles of liberty and equality may succeed in changing the organisation of nations, in overthrowing the lawful

distinctions of social rank, in reducing all men to one nominal level; but they can never accomplish the equal distribution of wealth and property. Consider America.... It is plain that if the mutual rights of men and their status are made to depend on degrees of wealth, the majority of the people, being without wealth, must fail to establish their rights; whereas the minority who are wealthy will assert their rights, and, under society's sanction, will exact oppressive duties from the poor, neglecting the dictates of humanity and benevolence. The adoption of these principles of liberty and equality in Japan would vitiate the good and peaceful customs of our country, render the general disposition of the people harsh and unfeeling, and prove finally a source of calamity to the masses. . . .

"Though at first sight Occidental civilisation presents an attractive appearance, adapted as it is to the gratification of selfish desires, yet, since its basis is the hypothesis that men's wishes constitute natural laws, it must ultimately end in disappointment and demoralisation. . . . Occidental nations have become what they are after passing through conflicts and vicissitudes of the most serious kind; and it is their fate to continue the struggle. Just now their motive elements are in partial equilibrium, and their social condition is more or less ordered. But if this slight equilibrium happens to be disturbed, they will be thrown once more into confusion and change, until, after a period of renewed struggle and suffering, temporary stability is once more attained. The poor and powerless of the present may become the wealthy and strong of the future, and *vice versa*. Perpetual disturbance is their doom. Peaceful equality

can never be attained until built up among the ruins of annihilated Western states and the ashes of extinct Western peoples.” *

Surely, with perceptions like these, Japan may hope to avert some of the social perils which menace her. Yet it appears inevitable that her approaching transformation must be coincident with a moral decline. Forced into the vast industrial competition of nations whose civilisations were never based on altruism, she must eventually develop those qualities of which the comparative absence made all the wonderful charm of her life. The national character must continue to harden, as it has begun to harden already. But it should never be forgotten that old Japan was quite as much in advance of the nineteenth century morally as she was behind it materially. She had made morality instinctive, after having made it rational. She had realised, though within restricted limits, several among those social conditions which our ablest thinkers regard as the happiest and the highest. Throughout all the grades of her

* These extracts from a translation in the *Japan Daily Mail*, November 19, 20, 1890, of Viscount Tōrio's famous conservative essay do not give a fair idea of the force and logic of the whole. The essay is too long to quote entire; and any extracts from the *Mail's* admirable translation suffer by their isolation from the singular chains of ethical, religious, and philosophical reasoning which bind the various parts of the composition together. The essay was furthermore remarkable as the production of a native scholar, totally uninfluenced by Western thought. He correctly predicted those social and political disturbances which have occurred in Japan since the opening of the new parliament. Viscount Tōrio is also well known as a master of Buddhist philosophy. He holds a high rank in the Japanese army.

complex society she had cultivated both the comprehension and the practice of public and private duties after a manner for which it were vain to seek any Western parallel. Even her moral weakness was the result of an excess of that which all civilised religions have united in proclaiming virtue,—the self-sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the family, of the community, and of the nation. It was the weakness indicated by Percival Lowell in his "Soul of the Far East," a book of which the consummate genius cannot be justly estimated without some personal knowledge of the Far East.* The progress made by Japan in social morality, although greater than our own, was chiefly in the direction of

* In expressing my earnest admiration of this wonderful book, I must, however, declare that several of its conclusions, and especially the final ones, represent the extreme reverse of my own beliefs on the subject. I do not think the Japanese without individuality; but their individuality is less superficially apparent, and reveals itself much less quickly, than that of Western people. I am also convinced that much of what we call "personality" and "force of character" in the West represents only the survival and recognition of primitive aggressive tendencies, more or less disguised by culture. What Mr. Spencer calls the *highest* individuation surely does not include extraordinary development of powers adapted to merely aggressive ends; and yet it is rather through these than through any others that Western individuality most commonly and readily manifests itself. Now there is, as yet, a remarkable scarcity in Japan, of domineering, brutal, aggressive, or morbid individuality. What does impress one as an apparent weakness in Japanese intellectual circles is the comparative absence of spontaneity, creative thought, original perceptivity of the highest order. Perhaps this seeming deficiency is racial: the peoples of the Far East seem to have been throughout their history receptive rather than creative. At all events I cannot believe Buddhism—originally the faith of an Aryan race—can be proven responsible. The total exclusion of Buddhist influence from public education would not seem to have been

prize while I live, I find an emblem of your true-heartedness and affection. May you always keep fresh within your hearts those impulses of generosity and kindness and loyalty which I have learned to know so well, and of which your gift will ever remain for me the graceful symbol!

And a symbol not only of your affection and loyalty as students to teachers, but of that other beautiful sense of duty you expressed, when so many of you wrote down for me, as your dearest wish, the desire to die for His Imperial Majesty, your Emperor. That wish is holy: it means perhaps even more than you know, or can know, until you shall have become much older and wiser. This is an era of great and rapid change; and it is probable that many of you, as you grow up, will not be able to believe everything that your fathers believed before you;—though I sincerely trust you will at least continue always to respect the faith, even as you still respect the memory, of your ancestors. But however much the life of New Japan may change about you, however much your own thoughts may change with the times, never suffer that noble wish you expressed to me to pass away from your souls. Keep it burning there, clear and pure as the flame of the little lamp that glows before your household shrine.

Perhaps some of you may have that wish. Many of you must become soldiers. Some will become officers. Some will enter the Naval Academy to prepare for the grand service of protecting the empire by sea; and your Emperor and your country may even require your blood. But the greater number among you are destined to other careers, and may have no such chances of bodily self-

sacrifice,—except perhaps in the hour of some great national danger, which I trust Japan will never know. And there is another desire, not less noble, which may be your compass in civil life: to live for your country though you cannot die for it. Like the kindest and wisest of fathers, your Government has provided for you these splendid schools, with all opportunities for the best instruction this scientific century can give, at a far less cost than any other civilised country can offer the same advantages. And all this in order that each of you may help to make your country wiser and richer and stronger than it has ever been in the past. And whoever does his best, in any calling or profession, to ennoble and develop that calling or profession, gives his life to his Emperor and to his country no less truly than the soldier or the seaman who dies for duty.

I am not less sorry to leave you, I think, than you are to see me go. The more I have learned to know the hearts of Japanese students, the more I have learned to love their country. I think, however, that I shall see many of you again, though I never return to Matsue: some I am almost sure I shall meet elsewhere in future summers; some I may even hope to teach once more, in the Government college to which I am going. But whether we meet again or not, be sure that my life has been made happier by knowing you, and that I shall always love you. And, now, with renewed thanks for your beautiful gift, good-bye!

III.

The students of the Normal School gave me a farewell banquet in their hall. I had been with them so

little during the year—less even than the stipulated six hours a week—that I could not have supposed they would feel much attachment for their foreign teacher. But I have still much to learn about my Japanese students. The banquet was delightful. The captain of each class in turn read in English a brief farewell address which he had prepared; and more than one of those charming compositions, made beautiful with similes and sentiments drawn from the old Chinese and Japanese poets, will always remain in my memory. Then the students sang their college songs for me, and chanted the Japanese version of “Auld Lang Syne” at the close of the banquet. And then all, in military procession, escorted me home, and cheered me farewell at my gate, with shouts of “*Manzai!*” “Good-bye!” “We will march with you to the steamer when you go.”

IV.

But I shall not have the pleasure of seeing them again. They are all gone far away—some to another world. Yet it is only four days since I attended that farewell banquet at the Normal School! A cruel visitation has closed its gates and scattered its students through the province.

Two nights ago, the Asiatic cholera, supposed to have been brought to Japan by Chinese vessels, broke out in different parts of the city, and, among other places, in the Normal School. Several students and teachers expired within a short while after having been attacked; others are even now lingering between life and death. The rest marched to the little healthy village of Tamatsukuri, famed for its hot springs. But there the

cholera again broke out among them, and it was decided to dismiss the survivors at once to their several homes. There was no panic. The military discipline remained unbroken. Students and teachers fell at their posts. The great college building was taken charge of by the medical authorities, and the work of disinfection and sanitation is still going on. Only the convalescents and the fearless samurai president, Saitō Kumatarō, remain in it. Like the captain who scorns to leave his sinking ship till all souls are safe, the president stays in the centre of danger, nursing the sick boys, overlooking the work of sanitation, transacting all the business usually entrusted to several subordinates, whom he promptly sent away in the first hour of peril. He has had the joy of seeing two of his boys saved.

Of another, who was buried last night, I hear this: Only a little while before his death, and in spite of kindest protest, he found strength, on seeing his president approaching his bedside, to rise on his elbow and give the military salute. And with that brave greeting to a brave man, he passed into the Great Silence.

V.

At last my passport has come. I must go.

The Middle School and the adjacent elementary schools have been closed on account of the appearance of cholera, and I protested against any gathering of the pupils to bid me good-bye, fearing for them the risk of exposure to the chilly morning air by the shore of the infected river. But my protest was received only with a merry laugh. Last night the Director sent word to all the captains of classes. Wherefore, an hour

after sunrise, some two hundred students, with their teachers, assemble before my gate to escort me to the wharf, near the long white bridge, where the little steamer is waiting. And we go.

Other students are already assembled at the wharf. And with them wait a multitude of people known to me: friends or friendly acquaintances, parents and relatives of students, everyone to whom I can remember having ever done the slightest favour, and many more from whom I have received favours which I never had the chance to return,—persons who worked for me, merchants from whom I purchased little things, a host of kind faces, smiling salutation. The Governor sends his secretary with a courteous message; the President of the Normal School hurries down for a moment to shake hands. The Normal students have been sent to their homes, but not a few of their teachers are present. I most miss friend Nishida. He has been very sick for two long months, bleeding at the lungs, but his father brings me the gentlest of farewell letters from him, penned in bed, and some pretty souvenirs.

And now, as I look at all these pleasant faces about me, I cannot but ask myself the question: "Could I have lived in the exercise of the same profession for the same length of time in any other country, and have enjoyed a similar unbroken experience of human goodness?" From each and all of these I have received only kindness and courtesy. Not one has ever, even through inadvertence, addressed to me a single ungenerous word. As a teacher of more than five hundred boys and men, I have never even had my patience tried. I wonder if such an experience is possible only in Japan.

But the little steamer shrieks for her passengers. I shake many hands—most heartily, perhaps, that of the brave, kind President of the Normal School—and climb on board. The Director of the Jinjō Chūgakkō, a few teachers of both schools, and one of my favourite pupils, follow; they are going to accompany me as far as the next port, whence my way will be over the mountains to Hiroshima.

It is a lovely vapoury morning, sharp with the first chill of winter. From the tiny deck I take my last look at the quaint vista of the Ōhashigawa, with its long white bridge,—at the peaked host of queer dear old houses, crowding close to dip their feet in its glassy flood,—at the sails of the junks, gold-coloured by the early sun,—at the beautiful fantastic shapes of the ancient hills.

Magical indeed the charm of this land, as of a land veritably haunted by gods: so lovely the spectral delicacy of its colours,—so lovely the forms of its hills blending with the forms of its clouds,—so lovely, above all, those long trailings and bandings of mists which make its altitudes appear to hang in air. A land where sky and earth so strangely intermingle that what is reality may not be distinguished from what is illusion,—that all seems a mirage, about to vanish. For me, alas! it is about to vanish forever.

The little steamer shrieks again, puffs, backs into midstream, turns from the long white bridge. And as the grey wharves recede, a long *Aaaaaaaaaa* rises from the uniformed ranks, and all the caps wave, flashing their Chinese ideographs of brass. I clamber to the

GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN.

roof of the tiny deck cabin, wave my hat, and shout in English: "Good-bye, good-bye!" And there floats back to me the cry: "*Manzai, manzai!*" [Ten thousand years to you! ten thousand years!] But already it comes faintly from far away. The packet glides out of the river-mouth, shoots into the blue lake, turns a pine-shadowed point; and the faces, and the voices, and the wharves, and the long white bridge have become memories.

Still for a little while looking back, as we pass into the silence of the great water, I can see, receding on the left, the crest of the ancient castle, over grand shaggy altitudes of pine,—and the place of my home, with its delicious garden,—and the long blue roofs of the schools. These, too, swiftly pass out of vision. Then only faint blue water, faint blue mists, faint blues and greens and greys of peaks looming through varying distance, and beyond all, towering ghost-white into the east, the glorious spectre of Daisen.

And my heart sinks a moment under the rush of those vivid memories which always crowd upon one the instant after parting,—memories of all that make attachment to places and to things. Remembered smiles; the morning gathering at the threshold of the old yashiki to wish the departing teacher a happy day; the evening gathering to welcome his return; the dog waiting by the gate at the accustomed hour; the garden with its lotus-flowers and its cooing of doves; the musical boom of the temple bell from the cedar groves; songs of children at play; afternoon shadows upon many-tinted streets; the long lines of lantern-fires upon festal nights; the dancing of the moon upon the lake; the clapping of hands by

the river shore in salutation to the Izumo sun; the endless merry pattering of geta over the windy bridge: all these and a hundred other happy memories revive for me with almost painful vividness,—while the far peaks, whose names are holy, slowly turn away their blue shoulders, and the little steamer bears me, more and more swiftly, ever farther and farther from the Province of the Gods.

THE END.

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